A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN THE RETENTION OF FIVE FEMALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS ON O‘AHU

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was a life history multiple case study investigating the issue of student retention at community colleges in Hawai‘i using oral interviewing as a primary method of data collection. The purpose of the current study was to investigate what role motivation played in a student’s decision to persist at a community college in Hawai‘i. The multiple case study was bounded by the following criteria: (a) students in their second year or more, (b) students enrolled in at least one class at a University of Hawai‘i Community College campus on O‘ahu in Spring 2016, and (c) students met at least two of the seven persistence risk factors (i.e., delayed entry into college, GED or equivalent, financial independence, single parent, dependents other than a spouse, part-time enrollment status, full-time employment) as described by the United States Department of Education (2002). The five students who met the criteria were between the ages of 20 and 39 years old. Two of the five students self-identified as Filipino, and the other three students self-identified as part Native-Hawaiian.

The students’ data were examined separately using Tinto’s retention model as well as five motivation theories including Maslow’s hierarchy, the self-determination theory, the expectancy-value theory, the attribution theory, and the self-theory. Using multiple motivation theories and concepts as a framework for analysis resulted in a comprehensive understanding of how motivation influenced the student’s decision to persist or drop out. The findings suggested that the students’ basic needs must be addressed in order for the students to persist in college. They also indicated that counselors and instructors played key roles in meeting the students’ need for relatedness.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In the twenty-first century, in a wealthy, industrialized country like the United States (U.S.) where primary and secondary education are compulsory and postsecondary education is readily available, one would expect that a larger percentage of adults would have some type of college degree (Farrell, 2007). After all, one of the most significant ways that Americans endorse the quintessential value of equality is by giving capable individuals an equal opportunity to access higher education which in turn boost their chances of achieving upward social mobility (Brint & Karabel, 1989). Nevertheless, the U.S. Census Bureau (2016) reported that only 42.3% of those 25 years or older have an associate's degree or higher. Is it in part due to our limited definition of equality? The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) (2017) states that its mission "is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access." However, is equality of access enough?

Farrell (2007) suggested that equality should refer not only to access but to "survival" as well (p. 139). In terms of postsecondary education, that means that students should have more than just an equal opportunity to enter college, they should also have an equal capacity to survive long enough to earn a college degree. Farrell asserted that equality of survival is determined by our expectations for completion. If we, as Americans, believe that all college students should be able to complete their requirements and earn a degree, then it is more likely that we would create policies and strategies to ensure that these societal expectations are satisfied; however, if we believe that not all college students will be able to complete a degree because of individual differences, then it is more likely that we will do nothing about the relatively low college graduation rate since attrition is just a naturally occurring phenomenon.

On the other hand, perhaps the low percentage rate of 42.3% reflects some individuals' expectation that a college degree will not make a difference in their future. After all, each capable person 18 years old or older must decide if the amount of time and money it takes to get a college degree will pay off in the long run. Attending college is a commitment and a noncompulsory additional expense in life. It is not an easy question to answer considering that the average hourly wage for high school diploma holders increased by 1.7% from 2016 to 2017 (Gould, 2017). In fact, in 2017, those with a high school diploma earned an average of $17.83 per hour; whereas, those with some college (including those with associate degree) earned an average of $19.41 per hour. The difference was only $1.58 per hour. For individuals who earned a bachelor's degree, they were rewarded with an average hourly wage of $32.40. As state spending for pubic colleges decreases and the personal cost of attending college increases, individuals find themselves carefully evaluating the return on investment for a college degree (Trombley, 2003; Sanchez, 2014).

In spite of the hourly rate increases for those with a high school diploma, proponents for higher education argue that a college degree does in fact increase the individual's opportunity for employment and higher earnings. According to Zinshteyn (2016), by 2020, two-thirds of all new jobs will require some college. It was already evident in 2016, where among young adults 20-24 years old, 77% of those with some college (including those with a two-year degree) were employed; in comparison, only 69% of those with a high school diploma were employed (U.S. Department of Education, 2017a). Among those 25 years old and older, the unemployment rate was 3.8% for those with an associate degree, 5% for those with some college but no degree, and 5.4% for those with only a high school diploma (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Higher education led to higher rates of employment.

In a nationwide report for the Social Security Administration, Tamborini, Kim, and Sakamoto (2015) revealed that males with some college (including those with an associate degree) earned $220,000 more in median lifetime earnings (earnings from 20-69 years old) than males with just a high school diploma. Females with some college (including those with an associate degree) earned $210,000 more in median lifetime earnings than females with a high school diploma. As for males with a bachelor's degree, they earned $890,000 more in median lifetime earnings than males with a high school diploma, and females with a bachelor's degree earned $630,000 more in median lifetime earnings than females with just a high school diploma.

Similarly, The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai‘i (2016) reported that among those between the ages of 15 to 75, college degree holders in Hawai‘i yielded higher lifetime earnings than those with only a high school diploma. Like the nationwide report, the expected increase in earnings differed between males and females; it also depended on whether they had an associate's or bachelor's degree. For example, males in Hawai‘i with an associate's degree earned $300,000 more in their lifetime than their high school counterparts. The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai‘i (2016) estimated their rate of return for an associate's degree from University of Hawai‘i Community Colleges (UHCC) as 10.8%. Females in Hawai‘i with an associate's degree earned $400,000 more in their lifetime than females with just a high school diploma. Their rate of return for investing in an associate's degree from UHCC is 10.7%. As for males with a bachelor's degree, they earned $1.5 million more in their lifetime earnings (rate of return of 13.5%) than males with a high school diploma, and females with a bachelor's degree earned $640,000 more in their lifetime earnings (rate of return of 10%) than females with a high school diploma. "On average, for each $1 a UH [University of Hawai‘i] student invests in their associate's degree, they receive $13.84 in

increased lifetime earnings" (The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, 2016, p. 1). Furthermore, college graduates benefited from greater access to healthcare, union representation, homeownership, geographic mobility, and retirement savings (Rugaber, 2017; The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, 2016).

The annual difference in earnings separated those working for minimum wages from those with a self-sustaining salary. In Hawai'i, it is not uncommon to hear people complain about the high cost of living. In fact, the median rent for a one-bedroom unit in May 2017 was $1,590 (Mumphrey, 2017). For those wanting to buy a home, the median sales price as of August 2017 was $419,000 for a condo unit and $786,250 for a single-family home on O'ahu (Honolulu Board of Realtors, 2017). In addition to the cost of housing, Hawai'i residents also paid three or four times the national average of kilowatt-hour for electricity and 70% more than the national average for food (Murakami, 2013: Roberts, 2014). Additional income makes a difference to those living in Hawai'i.

Apparently 69% of those who graduated from high school in the U.S. in 2015 still believed that earning a college degree was advantageous and worth pursuing (U.S. Department of Education, 2017b). Twenty-five percent of them immediately enrolled in two-year institutions and another 44% enrolled in four-year institutions after graduating from high school. It was not surprising since higher education continues to represent upward social and economic mobility to many Americans (Brint & Karabel, 1989). Built upon the principle of meritocracy, Americans look to higher education as a way to level the playing field; it is a place where the talented and hard working are rewarded on the basis of their skills, achievements, and hard work (Hune, 1998; Lee, 2002; Sue, 2010).

There are many desirable positions that require an associate degree. The median pay for those with an associate degree ranged from $35,000 to $74,999 in 2017 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). For example, two-year college graduates can qualify to become occupational therapy assistants, physical therapist assistants, web developers, cardiovascular technologists, diagnostic medical sonographers, environmental engineering technicians, geological and petroleum technicians, magnetic resonance imaging technologists, medical and clinical laboratory technicians, radiation therapists, respiratory therapists, veterinary technologists, and dietetic technicians to name a few.

Significance of the Problem

The problem in America is that many well-intentioned students who enter postsecondary education do not persist long enough to complete a degree. It is a problem of equality of survival (Farrell, 2007). The U.S. DOE (2017c) reported that within three years, only 21.9% of first-time (students who never attended college before), full-time (students taking at least 12 credits) degree or certificate seeking students who began their college career in 2012 graduated and earned degrees from two-year public institutions. In comparison, 58.6% of the first-time, full-time 2009 cohort graduated and earned degrees from four-year public institutions within six years (U.S. Department of Education, 2017d). It is important to note that college completion is usually measured in terms of 150% of normal program completion time, that would be three years for a student attending a two-year postsecondary institution and six years for a student attending a four-year postsecondary institution.

In the state of Hawai‘i, the UHCC average graduation rate for the first-time, full-time degree or certificate-seeking Fall 2013 cohort was 18% in 150% of the normal program completion time (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017a). The

transfer rate was 16%. In short, within three years, 34% of the students who started in Fall 2013 either graduated or transferred out. Another 16% of the UHCC students were still enrolled at the same institution. The remaining 50% of students dropped out.

UHCC consists of seven two-year public institutions: Hawai‘i Community College; Kaua‘i Community College; University of Hawai‘i, Maui College; Kapi‘olani Community College (KCC); Honolulu Community College (HCC); Leeward Community College (LCC); and Windward Community College (WCC). The last four colleges listed are located on the island of O‘ahu.

In Spring 2016, there were 27,441 students enrolled at UHCC (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research Office, 2017a). Approximately 58% of them were female (15,783). Fourteen percent of the student population self-identified as Caucasian, whereas 68% (18,527) of them self-identified as Asian or Pacific Islanders. Ninety-four percent of the students (25,707) listed Hawai‘i as their permanent home address while the remaining 5% (1,413) listed the U.S. mainland, U.S. military overseas, U.S. related areas, or a foreign country as their permanent address. In addition, there were more part-time (66%) students than full-time (34%) students enrolled. The average student age was 25 years old.

University of Hawai‘i Strategy for 2015-2021

The current research study aligns with the Hawai‘i Graduation Initiative, which is one of the four priorities for the University of Hawai‘i for 2015-2021. Their aim is to “[i]ncrease the educational capital of the state by increasing the participation and completion of students, particularly Native Hawaiians, low-income students and those from underserved regions and populations and preparing them for success in the workforce and their communities” (University of Hawai‘i, 2015, p. 1). The stated goal is for 55% of the working age adults to have earned a

postsecondary degree by 2025. The university lists four strategies to accomplish this goal. One strategy is to improve the transition from secondary education to postsecondary education. Another strategy is to align the college curriculum with the needs of the community and the workplace. A third strategy is to provide ample support services for students enrolled at the newer campuses such as the University of Hawai‘i West O‘ahu and Hawai‘i Community College at Pālamanui. The fourth strategy, which is most relevant to this dissertation, focus on "structural improvement that promote persistence to attain a degree and timely completion" (University of Hawai‘i, 2015, p. 2). The last strategy involves creating transfer pathways for community college students to four-year postsecondary institutions, addressing the effectiveness and efficiency of developmental education, increasing college completion, creating a pathway-based registration system, scheduling classes to promote degree completion, boosting financial aid resources, improving support services, and effectively using summer sessions to complete degree requirements. The current study contributes to the Hawai‘i Graduation Initiative by raising awareness about community college student issues related to retention.

Persistence Risk Factors

The U.S. DOE (2002) identified seven persistence risk factors for college students: (a) delayed entry into postsecondary institution after high school, (b) possession of a GED or equivalent instead of a high school diploma, (c) financial independence, (d) being a single parent, (e) having dependents (e.g., children) other than a spouse, (f) attending college part time, and (g) working full time while attending college. The more risk factors a student has, the more likely the student will drop out. Approximately 50% of two-year college students possess two or more persistence risk factors. What makes matters worse is that these students are usually

academically underprepared for college-level work and need support in basic reading and math (Greene, Marti, & McClenney, 2008).

Purpose of Study

Need for Qualitative Research on Community College Students in Hawai‘i

The bulk of prior quantitative and qualitative research studies investigating the retention of college students were conducted in the continental U.S. (e.g., Deil-Amen, 2011; Greene et al., 2008; Karp, Hughes & O'Gara, 2010; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008; Marti, 2008; Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Pike, Kuh, & McCormick, 2011; Porchea, Allen, Robbins, & Phelps, 2010; Tinto, 1997). In contrast, there were only a few quantitative and qualitative research studies on the topic conducted in the State of Hawai‘i. Many of these studies were theses or dissertations. In fact, in 2014, when I did a search using Academic Search Premier and ERIC, I could find only two studies in peer-review journals about the retention of community college students in Hawai‘i. They were Makuakane-Drechsel and Hagedorn's (2000) quantitative study on Native Hawaiian students, and Naughton's (1993) description of a vocational education model used at UHCC.

Higbee, Arendale, and Lundell (2005) expressed the need for researchers to conduct more qualitative research studies in order to better understand the "nuanced view of the complexity of students' lived experiences" (p. 12). In addition, Prospero and Vohra-Gupta (2007) stated that unlike quantitative studies, qualitative studies provided educators, policy makers, and the general public with a thick, rich description about participants. Qualitative studies were necessary, as they "complement the more generalizable data that are gained through quantitative measures" (Higbee, Arendale, & Lundell, 2005, p. 12).

In 1997, Liane Hansen of the National Public Radio interviewed a country family doctor, Dr. David Loxtercamp, who stressed the importance of making house calls to his patients in Belfast, Maine. In the interview, Dr. Loxtercamp argued, "[D]octors expect too much from data and not enough from conversation" (Loxtercamp, 2011). This caused me to wonder whether educational researchers, like medical doctors, expect too much from statistics and not enough from interviews. I have often come across data from quantitative studies describing the relationship between student characteristics and the probability of the students' persistence in college, but less frequently have I found qualitative studies based on conversations with the students that examined their perspectives and struggles in order to get a better understanding of their beliefs and attitudes about themselves in college. My qualitative research study pursued the educational version of what Dr. Loxtercamp calls "patient-centered care."

Research Question

Referring to Porchea, Allen, Robbins, and Phelps' (2010) conceptual model of retention, I chose to focus my study specifically on the psychosocial factor of motivation. One of the reasons was because I was interested in examining student factors rather than institutional factors. Second, of all the student factors, psychosocial factors seems to be the ones that students have some control over in comparison to their situational factors, socio-demographic factors, and prior academic preparation factors. Moreover, psychosocial factors were reported to be just as important as the students' prior academic preparation when it came to retention. Before I conducted an in-depth literature review of the three psychosocial factors -- motivation, social engagement, self-regulation -- I thought that I could examine all three for my study. However, once I uncovered the massive amount of literature for each psychosocial factor, I knew that I had to narrow it down to one. I decided to focus specifically on the influence of the psychosocial

factor of motivation on UHCC student retention by asking the question "what role does motivation play in a student's decision to persist in a community college in Hawai'i?" It is not to say the other two psychosocial factors are any less important. In fact, I would highly recommend that future qualitative research be conducted to better understand the roles they play in retention.

Position Statement

In my years of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) at community colleges in Washington and Hawai'i, I frequently came across capable and competent students who expressed their strong desire to pursue a college degree in order to work in a particular field in the U.S. Some of them were professionals in their native country and wanted to earn the necessary credentials to do similar work in the U.S. Surprisingly, the majority of students who expressed interest in earning a college degree dropped out before they completed their degree. I thought that this issue of retention was perhaps unique to the population I was teaching. Was it a language issue? Since then, I have come to realize that the problem of retention not only affects non-native English speaking students but native English speaking students too. Furthermore, I have learned that the factors that compel students to persevere or drop out are more numerous and much more complicated than what I had originally assumed.

In 2008, after teaching and doing administration work in education for 15 years, I found myself in a similar predicament. My love for learning and a good challenge drove me to quit my job and go back to college. At that point, I could not decide whether I wanted to pursue a Juris Doctor degree or a Doctor of Philosophy in education. Since I was always curious about the legal field and was drawn to the potential financial benefits, I decided to pursue law school first. With no experience in law, and absolutely no exposure to the field, I entered law school as an older student. After months of struggling with cryptic final exams, battling fiercely to maintain

mediocre grades, questioning the law school professors' teaching methods, failing to adapt to the adversarial culture of law school, and never finding the support I needed, I knew I had made a mistake. At that point what were my options? How could I consider dropping out of law school since I had always prided myself on completing what I started especially when it came to academics, not to mention I had taken out a substantial amount of loan to pay for this private school education. What were the implications of dropping out? This was a bittersweet period in my life. After reflecting on my crisis and discussing my options with trusted family members, mentors, and friends, I decided to take a leave of absence from law school. Little did I know that my shortcomings in law school were preparing me to relate to some of the participants I interviewed for this study. Hence, this qualitative study reflects my personal journey as well as my professional journey as an educator to better understand the issues of retention in higher education.

CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Historical Development of Community Colleges in the United States

Throughout history, community colleges also called two-year colleges or junior colleges played a unique role in the U.S. education system. The community college movement was a facet of America's democratization of public school education for the masses (Tillery & Deegan, 1985; Witt, Wattenbarger, Gollattscheck, & Suppieger, 1994). Between 1874 and 1904, there was a 600% increase in high school graduates, many of whom aspired to go on to college (Witt et al., 1994). Yet, elite American colleges, such as Harvard College, founded in 1636, were inaccessible to the average person. They were specifically designed to prepare young, wealthy, high-society males for professions and upper-class lifestyles. Using the British model of higher learning, students at these colleges were taught a classical curriculum composed of subjects such as classical literature, arithmetic, Greek, and Latin. Nevertheless, by the turn of the 19th century, with the rapid industrialization and the progress of railroads, the building of towns and cities, and the development of a telegraph system, the classical education model was outdated and inadequate (Tillery & Deegan, 1985; Witt et al., 1994). America required scientists, engineers, and business people who could meet the industrial demands of the country, the mechanization of agriculture, and other essentials of a growing country. Congress responded by passing the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided each Congress member with an endowment of 30,000 acres of land to be sold and used for the development and support of land grant state colleges. Land grant state colleges revolutionized the college curriculum by emphasizing technology, engineering, agriculture, and applied science instead of a classical curriculum. These ground breaking four-year institutions gave people better access to higher education (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1970; Witt et al., 1994). Still, the scattering of state colleges

and universities were too far away from most people living in small remote towns (Witt et al., 1994). Hence, it remained inconceivable for the majority of high school graduates to leave their hometowns and families behind in order to embark on a lofty academic endeavor (Tillery & Deegan, 1985; Witt et al., 1994).

In the 1880s, as an increasing number of students graduated from high schools, a group called the populists emerged and began pushing for the democratization of higher education. They wanted to see the masses gain access to colleges (Andrews & Fonseca, 1998; Fields, 1962; Witt et al., 1994). In addition, people began to realize that education was a means to upward social mobility (Thornton, 1972). In response to the demands of the common people, university elitists pushed back, arguing that it was essential that universities remained exclusive for scholars and researchers worthy of acquiring advanced knowledge; access should be only granted to those with the potential to become experts in their fields (Fields, 1962; Witt et al., 1994). At the turn of the 20th century, there were already 238,000 students enrolled in universities. The elitists were alarmed at the ever-increasing number of students graduating from high school, and declared that the magnitude of prospective college students would eventually overwhelm the higher education system. They came up with an idea that common schools should take on the additional responsibility of educating the majority of high school graduates (Fields, 1962).

For this reason, it was not the populists but the elitists, the university presidents and deans, who brought the vision of junior college to fruition (Tillery & Deegan, 1985). As early at 1852, Henry Tappan, the President of the University of Michigan, proposed that American universities separate the lower division (first two years) from the upper division (second two years), where freshman and sophomores focus on general education courses in the lower division before transferring to the upper division to specialize in a field. However, his proposal was not

implemented at that time. In 1869, William Folwell, the first president of the University of Minnesota, suggested that high schools be extended for two extra years and graduates be admitted into a university without having to take entrance examination (Thornton, 1972; Witt et al., 1994). His proposal was also not implemented at that time.

Then in 1892, Willam R. Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago, proposed and implemented the division of the four-year institution into an upper and lower division (Witt et al., 1994). The upper division, that is, the students' junior and senior years focused on advanced studies and research. It was referred to as the university college or senior college. In 1895, Harper coined the name junior college for the lower division which served freshmen and sophomores taking general education courses. He insisted that junior colleges serve students planning to transfer to the upper division, as well as students who wanted to terminate their education after two years (Fields, 1962; Thornton, 1972). Students who left college after two years could officially earn an associate degree.

Using the University of Chicago as a model, Harper envisioned transforming the entire nation's postsecondary education system (Witt et al., 1994). He concocted a three-fold national plan. First, Harper convinced at least two-dozen financially distressed four-year colleges to eliminate their last two years of schooling and convert their institutions into junior colleges (Fields, 1962). Second, from 1897 to 1917, Harper persuaded a handful of newly formed postsecondary institutions to establish themselves as junior colleges (Witt et al., 1994). Third, Harper's worked toward creating a network of high schools as affiliates of nearby universities. In 1901, a high school in Joliet, Illinois agreed to expand its curriculum to include a fifth and sixth year. It was the first public junior college of record (Fields, 1962; Jurgens, 2010; Thornton, 1972; Witt et al., 1994). Students earned college credits in their last two years, which were

recognized by the University of Chicago, University of Illinois, and Northwestern University (Witt et al., 1994). Tuition was free for the fifth and sixth year high school students since they were officially still in high school. In 1913, the high school constructed a separate building for the fifth and sixth year department. Then in 1915, the department became Joliet Junior College still governed by the high school board and superintendent, but with its own dean.

Other junior colleges were subsequently established, and in 1917, the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) began to create standards for junior colleges (Witt et al., 1994). Junior colleges were to be institutions of higher education offering the first two years of college curriculum parallel to that of a four-year college. Since Joliet Junior College met the requirements, they earned their accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary School in 1917 (Fields, 1962). According to the National Study of Junior Colleges conducted by Floyd McDowell, there were 39 public high schools with extended curricula and 93 junior colleges by the end of 1918 (Witt et al., 1994).

In the 1920s, after World War I when America's industrial economy was thriving, junior colleges gained more recognition and acceptance into the American education system (Witt et al., 1994). Junior colleges became known as an affordable means to higher education (Andrews & Fonseca, 1998; Witt et al., 1994). The greatest appeal was its proximity to prospective students. It was viable for the students to remain at home, work, raise a family, and earn a college degree.

In the 1920s, AAJC revised its official definition of junior colleges to institutions which provided "curriculum suited to the larger and ever changing civic, social and vocational needs of the entire community in which the college is located" (Witt et al., 1994, p. 40). The typical

models of junior colleges included junior colleges that were part of high schools, private junior colleges, and public junior colleges (Andrews & Fonseca, 1998).

Witt, Wattenbarger, Gollattscheck, and Suppiger (1994) reported that between 1922 and 1927, the number of public junior colleges grew to 146 and enrollment increased by 217%. One of the main reasons for the rapid growth of public junior colleges during this time period was California's push to create district junior colleges (Witt et al., 1994). As the trend to support state subsidized public colleges with local property taxes and supplemental state funds grew in California, public junior colleges thrived and private junior colleges found themselves at a disadvantage.

Prior to the establishment of public junior colleges in California, there were a limited number of liberal arts colleges scattered throughout the state. Furthermore, high school graduates had access to only two universities in the state -- Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley (Carnegie, 1970; Fields, 1962; Witt et al., 1994). In response to the increasing number of high school graduates wanting to attend college in California, Stanford University's president, David Jordan, and the University of California at Berkeley's dean, Alexis F. Lange, became more adamant about restricting admission to avoid the problem of overcrowding (Thornton, 1972; Witt et al., 1994). They supported Harper's idea of distributing the demand for higher education among universities, junior colleges, and normal schools to help alleviate the load on the universities. Six-year high schools had already existed in the state but the California law—the 1907 Upward Extension Law gave the practice legal recognition (Witt et al., 1994). In the same year, the University of California at Berkeley allowed students to earn credits for postgraduate courses taken at six-year high schools. The postgraduate courses, composed of technology, modern language, math, English, history, Latin,

and economic courses were free for California residents (Carnegie, 1970; Witt et al., 1994). As for nonresidents, they were asked to pay four dollars per course.

Then, California passed the Ballard Act in 1917, which allowed the state to fund junior colleges based on a formula that allocated money according to the number of students they served (Fields, 1962; Witt et al., 1994). Furthermore, it allowed municipals with $3 million in taxable property value to establish their own public junior colleges (Witt et al., 1994). Later, the District Junior College Law of 1921 was passed to amend the Ballard Act. This 1921 law allowed several high school districts and areas not covered by high school districts to reorganize and apply for state funding as a district junior college. Moreover, junior colleges were finally authorized to organize their own board and operating budget (Fields, 1962). By 1928, six-year high schools had decreased in number while the number of freestanding district junior colleges increased (Witt et al., 1994).

In the 1930s, although junior colleges had predicted a decline in enrollment because of the Great Depression, it was a time of great expansion (Witt et al., 1994). Families who would have typically sent their youth to a university could no longer afford to pay $1000 for tuition, room, and board since it was more than the average annual salary. Those who saved for their child's higher education lost all of their college education funds as banks failed. Students fortunate enough to go to college often had to settle for junior colleges in their area. As the Great Depression lingered on, other people once employed found themselves without jobs. They relied on the local junior colleges to help them learn new skills to become employable in other fields (Fields, 1962; Tillery & Deegan, 1985; Witt et al., 1994). In comparison to the universities, junior colleges were better organized to help the average person since they offered short-term vocational programs and evening classes (Witt et al., 1994). With a major crisis on

hand, President Roosevelt funneled billions of dollars into agriculture, public works, and government job programs. Much of the public works budget was earmarked for educational projects including those at public junior colleges.

In 1935, President Roosevelt established the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, which among other things, allocated funds for emergency junior colleges (Witt et al., 1994). These colleges were to be supervised by state universities, but housed at local public schools in the evenings. They benefited indirectly from the Smith Hughes Act (1917) since the high schools had access to the latest equipment used in agriculture, trades, industries, and home economics (Bragg, 2006; Witt et al., 1994). The Great Depression brought about an emphasis on short-term courses, vocational training, and adult education while still preparing students who wanted to transfer to four-year institutions (Thornton, 1972).

From 1941 to 1944, during World War II, the total number of junior colleges decreased from 627 to 586 (Witt et al., 1994). One reason was because emergency junior colleges lost their federal funding when those unemployed found jobs or became soldiers. The second reason was because the Selective Service Act of 1940 allowed university students to be exempt from the draft, but it typically did not exempt junior college students. To remain relevant, junior colleges participated in the war effort by designing new courses such as nursing aide training, aviation training, airplane repair, large diesel mechanics, cartography, surveying, and sheet metal drafting. They also offered adults in the community noncredit courses such as how to grow victory gardens or raise backyard poultry.

It was the second half of the 1940s that positively affected the future trajectory of the junior college movement. When the war was about to end, President Roosevelt was concerned that the returning veterans would become unemployed so he created the Serviceman's

Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the GI Bill of Rights (Witt et al., 1994). Honorably discharged veterans could receive full scholarships for any approved postsecondary institution. In addition, they were given a living allowance during their time in college (Andrews & Fonseca, 1988; Jurgens, 2010; Witt et al., 1994). The GI Bill of Rights transformed the face of higher education (Witt et al., 1994). In 1947, there were 500,000 students enrolled in junior colleges and approximately 43% of them were nontraditional veteran students.

In 1947, the *Higher Education for Democracy: A Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education* examined the higher education system in a six-volume report. Among other things, the publication examined the possibility of a tuition-free two-year college or a low-tuition two-year college, providing students with financial assistance, expanding adult education so that public higher education was accessible to all, and addressing discrimination and segregation. The report stemmed from the Army General Classification Test, which revealed that 49% of Americans were mentally capable of completing 14 years of education (State University of New York, 2015; Witt et al., 1994). In response, President Truman declared that his goal was to make higher education economically and geographically feasible so that more Americans could reach their potential (Fields, 1962). Since junior colleges had a connotation of serving only those planning to transfer to four-year institutions, the report suggested that two-year institutions be known as community colleges to emphasize the fact that they also offer two-year terminal programs in general education, vocational education, and adult education (Geller, 2001; State University of New York, 2015; President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947; Witt et al., 1994). People living in the community were highly encouraged to "discover and develop individual talents at low cost and easy access" (Fields, 1962, p. 63).

From 1950 to 1953, during the Korean War, the student enrollment remained stable (Witt et al., 1994). One reason was that community colleges were finally able to exempt males who were enrolled as full-time students from being drafted. Furthermore, community colleges actively recruited community members who wanted to improve themselves, increased the number of short-term nursing programs, and attracted ethnic minorities and other traditionally underrepresented groups (Cross, 1985; Geller, 2001; Tillery & Deegan, 1985). Because the Veterans Readjustment Act of 1952 was extended to the new group of Korean War veterans, community colleges experienced an even greater increase in enrollment after the war (Geller, 2001; Witt et al., 1994). In 1957, the community college progress was threatened when the President Eisenhower's Committee on Education Beyond High School published a report stating that the state or local government should take more responsibility for funding higher education (Geller, 2001). Despite the Committee's recommendation, federal funding continued to flow. For example, the National Defense Education Act of 1958, a response to Russia launching Sputnik, allocated $887 million for science education, technical education, and counseling and guidance (Witt et al., 1994). Most of the money went to four-year intuitions, but some community colleges were able to secure a portion of the funds.

In the 1960s, the nation experienced a growing phase of social unrest with anti-Vietnam War protests, the Civil Rights movement, and the Women's Rights movement (Witt et al., 1994). During this time, technology continued to advance and those without any postsecondary education found themselves competing to secure the limited number of decent paying unskilled labor positions (Thornton, 1972; Witt et al., 1994). No longer was higher education exclusively for those ranked at the top of class; instead, the community college welcomed displaced homemakers, first generation students, students with limited English proficiency, students with

marginal academic records, students with work obligations, students lacking basic skills, students with family obligations, ethnic minorities, students wanting to explore the possibility of college without spending a lot of money, students undecided about their careers, four-year college dropouts, veterans, and students from lower socio-economic groups (Andrews & Fonseca, 1998; Carnegie, 1970; Thornton, 1972, Witt et al., 1994). In 1969, there close to 2.5 million students enrolled in community colleges (Witt et al., 1994). This compares with the enrollment in 1955, which was at 869,720 (Witt et al., 1994).

There were a number of factors that attracted a diverse group of students to community colleges. First, public community colleges had an open door policy, which meant that they admitted any high school graduate or individuals over 18 years old who could benefit from higher education (Witt et al., 1994). That meant prospective students over 18 were not required to have a high school diploma to be admitted into a public community college. Second, the geographic proximity of community colleges and convenient commuting distance attracted those with family obligations and those who could not afford to leave home to attend college (Carnegie, 1970; Witt et al., 1994). Third, community colleges charged minimal or no tuition for their liberal arts courses and vocational/technical programs (Witt et al., 1994). In fact in 1968, 18% of the public community colleges charged no tuition at all (Carnegie, 1970; Witt et al., 1994). Fourth, community colleges committed to vocational and technical education developed a close working relationship with local businesses and industries in the area. This allowed the colleges to keep abreast on potential areas of growth for employment (Thornton, 1972). Lastly, community colleges offered remedial education to students who were rusty in their basic skills or who had never become proficient in those skills while in high school (Witt et al., 1994).

The problem was that only about half of the entering freshman students continued on to the next year (Thornton, 1972). From 1966 to 1967, 48.3% of the entering freshman students continued on as sophomores. From 1967 to 1968, the percentage increased to 53.8%. Then, from 1968 to 1969, it dropped to 51%. Faculty and administrators attributed retention problems to students having health issues, family obligations, financial issues, low academic abilities, lack of study skills, lack of transportation, work obligations, and having to move away.

Nevertheless, the 1960s brought about more federal funding for community colleges (Witt et al., 1994). The Vocational Education Act of 1963 brought in $450 million for the construction and operation of vocational education schools (Bragg, 2006; Witt et al., 1994). There was also a change in focus from being industry-centered to being student-centered. No longer were funds earmarked only for occupational fields that required workers; instead, funds were available to students who needed training or retraining in any occupation they chose (Bragg, 2006; Thornton, 1972). Moreover, the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963 generously allotted a portion of the $360 million in grants and low interest loans to two-year institutions to construct or renovate their facilities (Kaplin & Lee, 2007; Witt et al., 1994). There was also the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1964 which covered the cost to train and retrain the unemployed (Witt et al., 1994). The Higher Education Act of 1965 appropriated money for community education services, libraries, and human resources (Kaplin & Lee, 2007). Then, in 1968, the Amendment of the Vocational Education Act financed the purchase and maintenance of equipment, programs, and curriculum development (Bragg, 2006; Witt et al., 1994). With this additional federal funding came the expectation that community colleges would be equipped to prepare the disadvantaged and physically disabled for jobs (Thornton, 1972).

By the 1970s, every state had developed their own version of a community college system with no agreed upon standard of how community colleges should be organized or controlled (Witt et al., 1994). Lovell and Trouth (2006) pointed out that community colleges fell under various models of coordination. For example, under a statewide system, some colleges were controlled by the state board of regents for community colleges, some were under the state higher education board or commission, some were under the state board of education, some were under the statewide community college coordinating board responsible for all community colleges, and some were under a state community college governing board. Moreover, as were the case for community colleges in Hawai‘i and New York, some were part of a university system. All of the community colleges were funded by a combination of local property taxes, general state revenues, federal grants, and tuition paid by students (Thornton, 1972). Regardless of how the community colleges were organized in the state, the role of the governing boards remained the same; their job was to plan, implement, and review all programs as well as to allocate resources.

In 1970, the Carnegie Commission of Higher Education emphasized that community colleges should be comprehensive and should serve the educational needs of people who lived in the area (Bragg, 2006; Carnegie, 1970). It was not a liberal arts college or a technical institute, but a college that was able to balance these five functions: (a) offer the first two years of college courses to students planning to transfer to a baccalaureate program; (b) provide two-year general education programs for students not planning to transfer; (c) provide students with two-year occupational programs; (d) provide remedial education; and (e) offer continuing education classes tailored toward the community's interests and needs (Carnegie, 1970; Thornton, 1972; Witt et al., 1994).

First, the academic-transfer function complied with the nation's ideal of equality and meritocracy (Labaree, 1997). Community colleges would serve the masses and prepare students with higher order thinking skills. Those planning to transfer took liberal arts courses (e.g., math, English, science, social science, business, foreign language, fine arts) that were identical in scope and content to courses offered in the first two years at four-year institutions (Thornton, 1972). Students who successfully completed could (graduate and) transfer to the universities, while those unable or unwilling could terminate their college career at the end of their second year with an associate's degree. This was the predominant function of a community college until the 1960s, at which point, more students began to enroll in occupational programs (Carnegie, 1970).

Second, there were other students enrolled in general education (liberal arts) courses but not interested in advancing to four-year institutions (Thorton, 1972). General education courses were designed to provide students with knowledge about American politics, economics, cultural heritage, values, and attitudes. Hence, the two-year college students' purpose was to prepare for their roles as citizens, family members, and workers who could intelligently communicate with others and effectively solve problems (Labaree, 1997). In brief, community colleges played an essential role in the American education system by developing well-rounded citizens who were actively engaged in their democratic and civic duties.

Third, community colleges also fulfilled the function of vocation and technical schools where students could get specialized training necessary for a specific occupation (Labaree, 1997). Vocational and technical students were also required to take general education classes (Thorton, 1972). The demand for vocational education grew as some graduates with bachelor's degrees found themselves underemployed (Witt et al., 1994). The Federal Education Amendment of 1976 responded by allocating funds for continuing education programs to meet

the increasing demand for employees in areas such as solar energy technology, coal mining, healthcare, and computer technology (Bragg, 2006; Witt et al., 1994).

Fourth, the community college was charged with providing remedial education to students inadequately prepared for college level courses (Carnegie, 1970). Some students were there to improve their basic skills while others were entering college after a long absence from formal education. They required refresher courses in math, reading, and writing (Cross, 1985). Critics argued that the remedial function be eliminated because it lowered the community colleges' standards and cost too much; however, advocates for remedial education responded saying that these courses enabled the community colleges to maintain a standard of excellence while at the same time providing underrepresented groups of students with the basic academic skills necessary to succeed in college (Reitano, 1999).

Lastly, the function of a community college was to reach out to the community by offering residents the opportunity to pursue credit and noncredit classes (Cross, 1985). Continuing education students were not working toward a degree nor preparing for a job, but attending classes to enrich their lives (Thornton, 1972).

In 1975, community college enrollment was at 4.1 million students (Witt et al., 1994). Serving a large number of diverse students with diverse goals meant dealing with a myriad of problems. One of the community colleges' biggest challenges was retention. They tried to increase the retention rates by offering orientations, counseling, and advising (Tillery & Deegan, 1985; Witt et al., 1994). On the other hand, community colleges had to deal with critics declaring that the students had the right to fail (Tillery & Deegan, 1985). These critics argued that students should be able to explore courses and programs even if they were not academically prepared for them. Hence, the question arose as to who should be paying for the students' tuition

while students took the liberty to explore their options. The answer came soon enough when many states began to reduce funding and community colleges had no other option but to rely on students to take more responsibility for the cost of their tuition and fees (Tillery & Deegan, 1985; Witt et al., 1994).

It was also during the 1970s when the women's movement impacted community colleges (Witt et al., 1994). Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 prohibited discrimination based on sex at educational institutions receiving federal aid. Title IX addressed sex discrimination in the areas of admission and recruitment, financial aid, athletic programs, employment, housing, facilities, access to course offerings, counseling services, health insurance, marital status, and pregnancy (Kaplin & Lee, 2007). Advocates demanded that colleges make changes such as offer daycare services for college students with children, develop classes targeting mature women, allow greater access to nontraditional programs, and hire more female faculty members and administrators (Witt et al., 1994).

Ethnic minorities also had similar demands for postsecondary institutions (Witt et al., 1994). They wanted to see more minority-focused programs and the hiring of more minority faculty members and administrators. Their charge was backed by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited colleges who received federal funds from "denying, or providing a different quality of service, financial aid, or other benefit of the institution's programs, on the basis of race, color, or national origin" (Kaplan & Lee, 2007).

In 1980, there were 4.8 million students enrolled (Witt et al., 1994). It seems like America was making unstoppable progress in education until a report, *A Nation at Risk*, compared the quality of education at American public and private primary, secondary and tertiary schools to schools in other advanced nations (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). The

report looked at four areas in education: curriculum content, expectations, time, and teaching. According to this 18-month study whose purpose was to reform the American education system, America had lost its edge over other competitive nations throughout the world; America had become mediocre. Not only were the other countries matching the American students' educational achievements, they were actually accomplishing even greater results. The report highlighted the fact that American high school students spent less time in school, were assigned less homework, and were allowed to take less demanding courses (up to 50% of their courses could be electives). Furthermore, American schools employed inexperienced unqualified teachers especially in the areas of math, science and foreign language; tolerated the students' incapacity to master the required subject matters; utilized outdated materials and texts; and were not educating the students to be scientifically and technologically literate. The report criticized colleges and universities for their lax selection process when admitting students into higher education. Interestingly, it brought attention to America's ongoing quest to achieve excellence and equity simultaneously while competing in a global environment.

> We do not believe that a public commitment to excellence and educational reform must be made at the expense of a strong public commitment to the equitable treatment of our diverse population. The twin goals of equity and high-quality schooling have profound and practical meaning for our economy and society, and we cannot permit one to yield to the other either in principle or in practice (U.S. Department of Education, 1983).

During the same decade when America was called to grapple with balancing excellence and equity by reforming the education system, additional funding was earmarked to assist prospective college students. The Carl D. Perkins Act of 1984 (referred to as "Perkins") was established to assist disadvantaged students and special needs students to enter occupational

programs at community colleges (Bragg, 2006). In 1990, the Perkins law was revised with the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (Perkins II), then in 1998, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins III) opened up financial assistance to all college students interested in vocational or technical programs (U.S. Department to Education, 2017e). With financial assistance, the possibility of attending college became a reality for even more Americans.

In the 21st century, community colleges continue to offer short-term and long-term certificates as well as associate degrees in numerous fields (Jurgens, 2010). As the cost of pursuing higher education increases and high school graduates face stiffer competition to get into selective four-year institutions, community colleges have become an even more viable option. The National Center of Education Statistics stated that in the academic year 2013-2014, there were 1,685 two-year postsecondary institutions in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Furthermore, in 2014, there were over 6.7 million students enrolled in two-year institutions across the country (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). In brief, community colleges manifested the democratization of education in the U.S. since they were accessible, indiscriminate, comprehensive, adaptive, and addressed the individuals' lifelong educational needs in creative and significant ways (Fields, 1962).

Origins and Development of Community Colleges in Hawai‘i

Hawai‘i was a latecomer in establishing a community college system for it was not until 1964 that Governor Burns signed the Community College Act into law (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1974). One of the telltale signs of need was the on-going population growth in Hawai‘i. For example, between 1950 and 1960 the population had grown from 499,794 to 632,722 people (Kosaki, 1963). Furthermore, two-fifths of the population was under 20 years old. In 1954,

there were 5,872 high school graduates and by 1963, there were 9,464 graduates. Of those who graduated, 68% of them wanted to enroll in a postsecondary institution. The problem was that there was only one public university and four private colleges in Hawai‘i: University of Hawai‘i in Honolulu, Chaminade College in Honolulu, Church College in Lā‘ie, Jackson College in Honolulu, and Maunaolu College on Maui. High school graduates could also attend one of the five public technical schools: Hawai‘i Technical School, Maui Technical School, Kapi‘olani Technical School, Kaua‘i Technical School, and Honolulu Technical School. In fact, the technical school enrollment increased from 1,137 students in 1957 to 1,808 students in 1963, further demonstrating the growing interest in post high school education. Another viable option was to attend adult education classes (e.g., English language development, citizenship, basic education) managed by the Department of Public Instruction or adult vocational education managed by the DOE. Between 1962 and 1963, there were 15,724 students enrolled in adult education programs, and another 9,584 registered for adult vocational education programs.

Nevertheless, because an increasing number of high school graduates expected to specifically attend college, politicians and businessmen were forced to address the lack of postsecondary institutions in Hawai‘i (Kosaki, 1963). The growth of Hawai‘i’s economy in the 1950s and 1960s meant that they needed additional professionals, technically trained workers, managers, clerical workers, sales representatives, service workers, and other skilled workers to meet the islands’ needs. The bottom line was that after World War II, the demand for unskilled and uneducated workers, such as agricultural workers, decreased while the demand for white-collar workers and skilled workers increased.

Prior to the enactment of the Community College Act in 1964, recommendations were made for post-secondary educational institutions in Hawai‘i (Kosaki, 1963). As early as in 1941,

the Senate Concurrent Resolution advised the Department of Public Instructions to acquire two parcels of land in Hilo for a future junior college and vocational school. Following that, the Community Survey of Education in Hawai‘i of 1942, and the American Council of Education in 1943 recommended that high schools offer a 13th and 14th year, and that junior colleges are established throughout Hawai‘i. Then, in 1950, the Constitutional Convention authorized Hawai‘i to establish and maintain public junior colleges. They suggested that the University of Hawai‘i oversees the public junior colleges. In response, Paul Bachman, the president of the University of Hawai‘i, informed officials at a legislative interim briefing in 1956 that Hawai‘i did not need junior colleges since the needs of the community were already being met through the University of Hawai‘i’s extension courses, private colleges, and Department of Public Instruction’s adult general education program.

A year later, in 1957, the Stanford Report recommended that community colleges be established to provide advanced vocational education, general education, transfer programs, and continuing education (Kosaki, 1963). The report also suggested that the Department of Public Instruction oversee the community colleges instead of the University of Hawai‘i so that the university did not have to expand their course offerings or coordinate their lower division courses with the community college courses. Then in 1959, the same year that Hawai‘i became the 50th state, the Governor’s Committee on Education Beyond the High School moved for the establishment of community colleges to meet the needs of Hawai‘i’s youths, adults, and older residents (Kosaki, 1963; Kosaki, 1974). It was during this time that Teruo Ihara wrote his doctoral dissertation advising that the state establish one community college on Maui, Kaua‘i, the Island of Hawai‘i, and possibly three or four community colleges on O‘ahu (Kosaki, 1963).

Finally, submitting to public pressure, the University of Hawai‘i’s Study and Development Commission conducted a self-study (Kosaki, 1963). They concluded that the university could possibly establish community colleges to offer terminal general education programs and a dental hygiene program. In 1960, the Board of Regents adopted a policy stating that the University of Hawai‘i was to be solely responsible for public education beyond the secondary level under a single statewide system of higher education. As if the need for community colleges were not already established, in 1961, the legislature asked the Department of Health and Education and Welfare under the U.S. Office of Education to conduct a statewide survey. Predictably, the report advised the state to establish a community college system.

Still it was not until 1962 when John Burns became governor that the community college movement in Hawai‘i began to pick up momentum (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). Governor Burns effectively handled the resisters, including administrators and faculty members from the technical schools, the DOE, the University of Hawai‘i branch in Hilo, the University of Hawai‘i, and Maunaolu College. Soon after, in 1963, the Hawai‘i Legislature passed a House Resolution stating that the University of Hawai‘i’s existing programs were unable to accommodate all of the people’s higher educational needs. They wanted to see decentralized postsecondary institutions located in close proximity to the students’ homes. In the same year, the Legislature allocated $53,000 to the University of Hawai‘i to conduct a feasibility study on creating a statewide community college system (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1965). At the time of the allocation, Thomas Hamilton was the president of the University of Hawai‘i (1963 to 1968). He was very familiar with community colleges, having been the president of State University of New York (SUNY) from 1959 to 1962 (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). Hamilton entrusted the

important task of conducting the feasibility study to Richard Kosaki, who was a faculty member at the University of Hawai‘i.

As a part of his feasibility study, Kosaki traveled to California, Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania to learn about their public community college systems (Witt et al., 1994). Kosaki's (1963) feasibility study gave him a better understanding of the purposes and roles of community colleges nationwide (Witt et al., 1994). He believed that individuals in a democratic society could profit from a college education. Therefore, people should be given an equal opportunity and they should have the freedom to reach their full potential through postsecondary education. Kosaki was convinced that setting up a comprehensive community college system in Hawai‘i could provide more residents with the opportunity to choose from technical and vocational education, general education, transfer courses, and continuing education classes. Community colleges could serve a wide range of students from those who planned transfer to a four-year institution to those who were skittish about being in an institution of higher education. Moreover, two-year colleges would be more accessible geographically and economically, allowing late bloomers and those who historically did not do very well in school an opportunity to explore higher education through the colleges' open door policies. Kosaki saw the impact that community colleges had on people across the country, and became aware of the attention it was receiving from the federal government and other state governments.

In addition to visiting other community colleges, Kosaki (1965) also surveyed the 1964 high school seniors in Hawai‘i to find out how much interest there was in community colleges. In the survey, 69% of the 1964 private and public high school seniors said they would consider enrolling in a public community college. A larger percentage of public high school seniors (75%) expressed an interest in public two-year colleges than private high school seniors (52%).

Of those in favor of attending a community college, 50% of them said that they would need a part-time job, scholarship or loan to offset the cost. Interested students generally came from households where the father was a skilled worker or manager, and the mother was a housewife or held a clerical position. Prospective students were interested in studying liberal arts, business, secretarial work, automobile technology, and electronics. Typically their grade point average (GPA) was about 2.0. Of the 31% of high schools students who would not consider attending a community college, most of them came from households where their parents were college educated professionals and managers. These students typically maintained high GPAs and took college preparation courses throughout their high school years. The rest of the 31% of high school students who would not consider attending a community college had little or no interest in pursuing postsecondary education at all.

Kosaki (1963) came up with three alternative plans for public two-year colleges: (a) expand existing programs at the University of Hawai‘i and at technical schools; (b) construct additional branches of the University of Hawai‘i and authorize technical schools to offer college level courses; or (c) establish a system of community colleges. Although the first plan was the most economical and required the least amount of changes, it did not allow for the creation of a comprehensive community college system which he had seen in other states. Furthermore, students taking technical school courses would not be able to earn collegiate credits. As for the second plan, it offered vocational students collegiate level courses, increased the capacity for postsecondary institutions to meet students' needs, and increased geographic accessibility; however, with no changes in admissions requirement, many students in the underrepresented groups would continue to be denied access to college. Kosaki favored the third plan of establishing a system of comprehensive community colleges.

Kosaki decided that it was in the best interest of the state to adopt SUNY as the model for Hawai‘i (Witt et al., 1994). Hamilton’s first-hand knowledge and experience with SUNY probably had a huge influence on Kosaki’s choice. Nevertheless, Kosaki defended his choice as being unbiased, stating that the New York State University System most closely coincided with the tradition of Hawai‘i’s centralized political power.

Similar to New York’s community college system, all of the community colleges would be placed under the control of the university (Witt et al., 1994). The administrative agency would be the University of Hawai‘i’s Board of Regents. Kosaki (1963) recommended that people from the community serve on the local advisory committees to advocate for the community’s specific needs and advise the colleges about the latest business trends. The local advisory committee’s recommendations would not be final but would be taken into consideration by the Board of Regents. All of the community colleges’ provosts would report to the Vice President for Community College who in turn would be the only one reporting directly to the University of Hawai‘i’s president (Kosaki, 1963; Thornton, 1972). The community colleges represented a new type of higher education; therefore, they were not expected to adhere to the traditional ways and the governing rules of the university (Kosaki, 1963). The community colleges in Hawai‘i needed the freedom to serve a wider population of people by offering an array of programs tailored to local needs and interests.

It was important to note that the New York’s model for community colleges was not a common way to organize a community college system (Carnegie, 1970). In fact, Kosaki (1963) contemplated two other options before choosing SUNY as a model. Kosaki considered the option of having the community colleges supervised by the State Board of Education as they did in California and Florida. These states organized their system in a way that allowed them to ensure

state control over the community colleges since school districts in their states were managed separately and financed independently through local property tax. This was not a concern for Hawai‘i since all public educational institutions relied on the same pot of state revenues for funding. The second option was to create a separate independent State Board for Community Colleges similar to what they did in Massachusetts, Arizona, and Minnesota. The State Board for Community Colleges allowed community colleges to be front and center, receiving the attention and funding they needed to develop distinctively from four-year institutions. It was a viable option; however, after careful deliberation, Kosaki decided that it would not be in the best interest of Hawai‘i’s education system to create an entirely new board from scratch that would compete with the other educational boards for state funding and support. It was more practical and economical to place the community colleges under the University of Hawai‘i. For those reasons, Kosaki strongly recommended that Hawai‘i adopt the New York model. He said that Hawai‘i had to be frugal and efficient in how they organized their limited finances, natural resources, and human resources. For example, one of Kosaki’s visions was to have the University of Hawai‘i faculty members teach at the community colleges in the summer or have them provide in-service training for community college instructors.

Instead of each campus operating individually and offering the same courses, Kosaki (1963) suggested that Hawai‘i’s community colleges coordinate their programs statewide and direct the students to the appropriate college. All community colleges would offer the same general education curriculum, but offer different specialized programs. Programs requiring expensive up-to-date equipment would be limited to one or two campuses statewide. This way Hawai‘i’s community college system could afford to offer residents a wider range of programs. Kosaki (1974) articulated that the mission of Hawai‘i’s community colleges was to provide the

people of Hawai‘i with a comprehensive community college system that offered liberal arts, general education, vocational education, and community education; to increase accessibility with open door admissions; and to offer all residents an equal opportunity to access higher education.

Kosaki (1963) expected funding to come from the state similar to the way they funded primary and secondary education. He also expected financial resources to flow in from the county government, federal government, private foundations, and students. In the 1960s, students at the University of Hawai‘i were paying $170 per year for tuition and fees while the students at the technical schools were paying no tuition and a $40 fee. Kosaki recommended that community colleges charged students no more than 80% of what the tuition was at the University of Hawai‘i. Originally, Kosaki planned to forgo charging students any tuition, but because of Hawai‘i’s economy at that time and the extra costs incurred to establish a comprehensive community college system, the Board of Regent decided to charge students $25 per semester for tuition (Fearrien and Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1963; Kosaki, 1974). Nationally, the median community college tuition was about $121 per year (Kosaki, 1963).

Based on Kosaki’s favorable finding to establish a community college system for the state of Hawai‘i, the legislature passed the Community College Act of 1964, “to provide two year college transfer and general education programs, semi-professional, technical, vocational, and continuing education programs, and such other educational programs and services as are appropriate to such institutions” (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998, p. 261). For his work, Kosaki became known as the architect of Hawai‘i’s community college system (Witt et al., 1994).

After the Community College Act of 1964 became law, Governor Burns in 1965 signed Executive Order No. 22, authorizing the transfer of four technical schools -- Honolulu Technical School, Kapi‘olani Technical School, Maui Technical School, Kaua‘i Technical School -- from

the DOE to the University of Hawai‘i (Kosaki, 1965; Kosaki, 1974). It was the initial step in establishing a public statewide community college system (Kosaki, 1965). Then in 1968, LCC was established, in 1969 Hilo Technical School was transferred to the University of Hawai‘i, and in 1972 WCC was founded (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1974).

The vocational instructors who were teaching at the technical schools prior to the transfer were able to continue on as faculty (Kosaki, 1963). However, each institution had to hire instructors to teach liberal arts. It was not a smooth transition. In fact, the vocational instructors did not get along with the newly hired liberal arts faculty members who came across as too vocal and opinionated (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). The new faculty members were accused of being too lenient about the existing student rules of conduct and dress code. Another sore point for the vocational instructors was that because they did not have the same academic credentials as the liberal arts faculty members, they could not be paid the same salary as other college faculty members with advanced degrees. Fortunately for them, arrangements were made with the local trade unions to equalize the pay.

Regardless of the in-house disagreements, all faculty and administrators were forced to work together to market the idea of community colleges to the general public (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). They volunteered their time and made every effort to reach out to businesses and industry leaders in the community. As more students graduated from community colleges with the skills necessary to perform competently on the job, the general public began to accept the idea that the public community colleges were a viable option as postsecondary education.

In the early 1970s, the community colleges in Hawai‘i were accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). Nevertheless, there

were problems that needed to be addressed. For example, KCC's facilities on Pensacola Street were inadequate, as were the facilities and equipment at HCC.

As part of a larger postsecondary public education system, the community colleges fought hard to overcome being treated as inferior to the University of Hawai'i (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). They strived to keep their unique identity as community colleges mandated with a wider range of missions. In 1965, the community colleges started off with 2,411 students (Kosaki, 1974). In 1967, the first associate degrees were granted to five accounting students at Kapi'olani Community College. In 1972 the enrollment was 14,707, an increase of 510% since 1965 (Kosaki, 1974). As of Spring 2016, there were a total of 27,441 students enrolled in UHCC (University of Hawai'i, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017b). UHCC continues to uphold an open-door policy where individuals over 18 are not required to have a high school diploma, GED or equivalent to enroll in community college.

Honolulu Community College

The first technical school, the Territorial Trade School in Palama on O'ahu, was established under the Department of Public Instruction in 1920 (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Honolulu Community College, 2017). For a brief time the school was a part of McKinley High School, re-established as the Honolulu Vocational School, then in 1955, it was renamed Honolulu Technical School (Honolulu Community College, 2017). In 1966, after control of the school was transferred to the University of Hawai'i, it became Honolulu Community College. As a technical school, the institution held close ties with labor unions and the construction industry, enrolling mostly male students (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). From 1966 to 1967, HCC received a federal grant to create a police science program, then in 1968, it finally began offering liberal arts courses (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1974).

Currently, HCC is a nationally ranked public institution offering courses in vocational education, remedial education, and general education (Honolulu Community College, 2017). They award Associate of Science, Associate of Technical Studies, and Associate of Applied Science degrees, as well as a variety of certificates.

In Spring 2016, of the 3,710 credit students enrolled, 1,204 were full-time students (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research Office, 2017b). The average age was 26. Approximately 73% of the students were Asian or Pacific Islander. Of the Fall 2013 cohort who were first-time, full-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduates, 16% graduated within three years, 16% were still enrolled after three years, and 20% of the student transferred to a public or private four-year campus or to another two-year campus (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017c).

Kaua‘i Community College

In 1928, Kaua‘i Technical School was housed at Kaua‘i High School, intending to serve the island’s need for machinists in the plantation industry (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). When the plantation industries slowed down, Kaua‘i’s population decreased from 45,000 to 25,000. Kosaki (1963) initially did not recommend Kaua‘i Technical School to be a part of the conversion to the University of Hawai‘i system because Kaua‘i’s population was small. Moreover, when Kaua‘i high school students were surveyed, the majority did not express any interest in college. Kosaki doubted that they could get the minimum number of 200 enrollees (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1963). Kosaki recommended that the legislature just continue to study the feasibility of converting Kaua‘i Technical School in the future (Kosaki, 1963). However, Kaua‘i legislators thought otherwise; they adamantly advocated that Kaua‘i Technical School be converted into Kaua‘i Community College (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). Fortunately, for

the residents on the island, their voices were heard and Kauaʻi Technical School was one of the initial schools converted into a community college. In 1967, Kauaʻi Community College offered their first transfer courses.

Today, Kauaʻi Community College students have the option of earning Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degrees, and a variety of certificates (Kauaʻi Community College, 2017). Students can major in areas such as business, science, hospitality and tourism, and Hawaiian studies. In Spring 2016, of the 1,224 students enrolled, 336 were classified as full-time students (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research Office, 2017c). The average age was about 25 years old. Sixty-four percent were Asian or Pacific Islander. Among the first-time, full-time, degree or certificate-seeking Fall 2013 cohorts, 18% of the students graduated within three years, 15% transferred, and 17% of the students remained at that college after three years (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017d).

Maui Community College

Maui Vocational School was established in 1931, offering courses in auto mechanics, carpentry, and machine shop (University of Hawaiʻi Maui College, 2017). In 1958, the Department of Public Instruction renamed the school to Maui Technical School. Because the community wanted to establish a community college on this neighbor island, the County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution to endorse the establishment of such a college (Kosaki, 1963). When the Community College Act passed in 1964, the Board of Regents changed the school's name from Maui Technical School to Maui Community College, and in 1967, students were offered lower division transfer courses (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; University of Hawaiʻi Maui College, 2017). Maui served not only their island's residents but also students on Lānaʻi and

Molokaʻi (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). Faculty members typically flew to Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi to teach extension classes until they developed the Skybridge Interactive TV, which enabled remote learning.

In 2010, WASC approved Maui Community College's request to become the University of Hawaiʻi Maui College, since it began to offer baccalaureate degrees in addition to associate degrees and certificates (University of Hawaiʻi Maui College, 2017). In Spring 2016, of the 3,164 students at the University of Hawaiʻi Maui College, 1,009 were full-time students (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research Office, 2017d). The average age was about 27 years old. Approximately 61% of the student population was Asian or Pacific Islander. Among the Fall 2013 cohort of first-time, full-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students, 19% graduated within three years, 13% transferred, and 19% were still enrolled after three years (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017e).

Hawaiʻi Community College

Hawaiʻi Vocational School was established in 1941 to support the sugar industry on the Island of Hawaiʻi (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Hawaiʻi Community College, 2017). It offered classes such as auto mechanics, carpentry, machine shop, welding, and sheet metal to meet the demands of industry. In 1956, the name was changed to Hawaiʻi Technical School. In contrast to the Kauaʻi's legislators, Hawaiʻi's business leaders, faculty members, and legislators argued against the conversion of Hawaiʻi Technical School into a community college (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1963; Kosaki, 1974). They did not want Hawaiʻi Technical School to merge with the University of Hawaiʻi branch campus in Hilo (two-year college) to create a comprehensive community college because they were worried that the conversion meant that their University of Hawaiʻi branch campus in Hilo would forgo any chances of becoming a four-year institution

(Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1963). Kosaki (1963) responded by saying that the technical college would be the center of the community college if the University of Hawai‘i branch campus in Hilo converted into a four-year institution.

In 1969, the Board of Regent authorized the University of Hawai‘i branch campus in Hilo to offer upper division college courses (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). It was renamed Hilo College. In the same year, Hawai‘i Technical School became Hawai‘i Community College. Together Hilo College and Hawai‘i Community College formed the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. Hawai‘i Community College offered vocational technical education on campus while liberal arts students attended Hilo College to earn their liberal arts credits. Regardless of where the classes were physically held, students in both tracks earned an associate degree from Hawai‘i Community College. This arrangement led to confusion and many problems. In 1990, the Board of Regents decided to remove Hawai‘i Community College from the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s governance and placed it under UHCC.

Currently, Hawai‘i Community College offers certificates and associate degrees in programs such as accounting, agriculture, carpentry, early childhood education, Hawaiian studies, hospitality, information technology, liberal arts, and nursing (Hawai‘i Community College, 2017). In Spring 2016, there were 2,755 students enrolled, of which 998 were full-time students (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research Office, 2017e). The average age was 25 years old. Sixty-six percent of the students were Asian or Pacific Islander. Of the first-time, full-time, degree or certificate-seeking Fall 2013 cohort, 21% of them graduated within three years, 6% transferred, and 8% were still enrolled after three years (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017f).

Kapiʻolani Community College

Kapiʻolani Technical School on Oʻahu was established in 1947 with the merger of a practical nursing program, business education, and a hotel and restaurant program under the Territorial Department of Public Instruction (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; University of Hawaiʻi Community College System; 1969). Kapiʻolani Technical School transferred to the University of Hawaiʻi in 1965 and was renamed Kapiʻolani Community College. It offered transfer courses in 1968 and expanded its breadth of vocational technical programs. It was not long before it began to outgrow its campus on the corner of Pensacola Street and Kapiʻolani Boulevard. To address the problem, Kosaki, and a supporter of KCC, Hitoshi Mogi, boldly requested that the army give the University of Hawaiʻi the surplus federal land at Fort Ruger to be used as a future site for KCC (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998). Fortunately, the General who was in charge of the land approved the transfer of 50 acres of land. In 1975, KCC moved to its new location near the iconic Diamond Head.

Currently, KCC offers over 20 credit programs, which culminate into an associate degree in arts, associate degree in science, or certificate (Kapiʻolani Community College, 2017). Compared to the other community colleges, KCC had the most students enrolled in Spring 2016. Of the 7,260 credit students enrolled, 2,540 were full-time students (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research Office, 2017f). The average age was 25. Asian and Pacific Islander students constituted 69% of the student population. Among the Fall 2013 cohort first-time, full-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduates, 18% graduated within three years, 19% transferred, and 17% were still enrolled after three years (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017g).

Leeward Community College

At the time of the feasibility study, there were no postsecondary institutions on the Leeward side of Oʻahu; therefore, the Leeward Economic Planning Board and community organization leaders advocated to establish a community college in the area to accommodate the growing population and large number of military families (Kosaki, 1963). In 1968, Leeward Community College was founded. For a year, LCC held classes at the abandoned Pearl Kai Elementary School until the new facilities between Pearl City and Waipahu were completed (Kosaki, 1974; Leeward Community College, 2017). In 1969, LCC led the state in community college enrollment with 3,221 students (Kosaki, 1974).

Currently, LCC offers 63 certificates and associate degrees in areas such as liberal arts, teacher education, natural science, automotive technology, business, culinary arts, plant biology and tropical agriculture, and health programs (Leeward Community College, 2017). In Spring 2016, LCC enrolled 6,953 students, of which 2,559 were full-time students (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research Office, 2017g). The average age of students was 24. Approximately, 69% of the students were Asian or Pacific Islander. Among the 2013 cohort of first-time, full-time, degree or certificate-seeking undergraduates, 16% graduated within three years, 17% were still enrolled after three years, and 17% transferred out (University of Hawaiʻi, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017h).

Windward Community College

Windward Community College did not exist until 1972 when the University of Hawaiʻi received authorization to use former buildings of Kaneohe State Hospital on Oʻahu (Fearrien & Lucas, 1998; Kosaki, 1974). Developing a college campus on the Windward side of the island

made higher education more accessible to the many Native Hawaiians and military families in the area. In 1995, the college received funding to renovate and build new facilities.

WCC offers degrees in Associate in Arts in Liberal Arts, Associate in Arts in Hawaiian Studies, Associate in Science in Natural Science, and Associate in Science in Veterinary Technology (Windward Community College, 2017). In addition, it offers a variety of certificates. In Spring 2016, there were 2,375 students enrolled, of which 668 were full-time (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research Office, 2017h). The average age was 26 years old. Approximately 62% of the student population was Asian or Pacific Islander. Of the first-time, full-time degree or certificate-seeking Fall 2013 cohort, 16% graduated within three years, 19% transferred, and 14% were still enrolled after three years (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017i).

In sum, UHCC is composed of seven community colleges across the state. UHCC has made higher education more accessible to the residents of Hawai‘i. Today, prospective degree seeking students are able to enroll in technical and vocational courses, general education courses, and transfer courses at a relatively low cost, while community members are able to take continuing education classes in driving distance. It was exactly what Kosaki envisioned when he championed a system of comprehensive community colleges for the state of Hawai‘i.

CHAPTER 3. STUDENT RETENTION CONCEPTUAL MODELS

In 1975, when Tinto published the article "Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research," there was a dearth of research that addressed the retention of postsecondary students. The little information that was available tended to focus on the probability of students dropping out based on individual and institutional characteristics. Tinto did not dismiss the importance of these characteristics but also wanted to examine the longitudinal process involved in the students' decision to persist or dropout. It is important to note that Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema and the conceptual model of Porchea et al. (2010) are macro-level retention models.

Tinto's Conceptual Schema for Dropouts from College

Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema was premised on Durkheim's Theory of Suicide. Durkheim alleged that individuals were more likely to commit suicide when they had "insufficiently integrated into the fabric of society" (Tinto, 1975, p. 91). Presuming Durkheim's theory was correct, Tinto hypothesized that students were more likely to withdraw from college when they held a different set of values than the college's collective values, (e.g., student conduct, standards of academic achievement), or when they did not have sufficient interaction with others on campus. Tinto's conceptual schema explained the connection between individual characteristics, institutional features, and the longitudinal process of students deciding to persist or withdraw from college. He distinguished between students who voluntarily withdrew from college from those who were forced to withdraw because of poor academic performance or behavioral issues.

According to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, every year students with distinct pre-entry attributes -- family background (e.g., socioeconomic status, relationship with parents,

parents' interest and expectations), precollege schooling (e.g., high school GPA, class rank, characteristics of former high school), and individual attributes (e.g., ability, personality, attitude, sex) -- enter college and form their initial commitment to the goal of college completion at a postsecondary institution. In turn, their initial commitment prompts them to become more (or less) engaged in the college's academic and social system. While in college, the students' level of academic integration and social integration compel them to revisit and modify their commitment to the goal of degree completion at that particular institution. Throughout the students' time in college, they are subjected to numerous external factors also vying for their time, energy, and commitment. Collectively, the students' pre-entry attributes, commitments, and level of integration interact in a complex process prompting them to persist or drop out.

Tinto (1975) asserted that while the students' pre-entry attributes and initial commitments were important, it was the students' institutional experience in the academic system and social system, which largely influenced them to persist or withdraw. Tinto wanted to emphasize that it was not just the students' pre-entry attributes that determined the students' outcomes but also the longitudinal process of the students' interaction with the college's academic and social system that determined their outcomes. Students well integrated into the academic system were those who met the college's standards of grade and intellectual development. They were the ones who experienced "congruency between the intellectual development of the individual and the prevailing intellectual climate of the institution" (Tinto, 1975, p. 106). Based on a prior study done by Hackman and Dysinger (1970), Tinto expected that students with high academic competency but a low commitment to completion were likely to transfer or withdraw and perhaps re-enroll later; students with low academic competency but a high commitment to

completion were likely to persist in college until forced to withdraw; and students with low academic competency and a low commitment to completion were likely to drop out.

The students' decision to persist also depended on their ability to integrate into the social system at college (Tinto, 1975). Tinto claimed that students well integrated into the social system developed a sense of belonging by forming relationships with others on campus. These relationships provided students with social rewards in the form of networks of communication, friendship, and support. In contrast, students who felt isolated believed that they did not fit into the collective social climate of the college. Tinto said that if these students could establish friendships with peers similar to themselves, then they would be more likely to persist. Therefore, colleges with a large student population and diverse subcultures were better suited to provide students with the opportunity to find peers like themselves. On the other end of the social spectrum were the students who prioritized social integration over academic integration to the point where they could no longer meet the college's academic standards. These students did not withdraw voluntarily but were forced to withdraw when their cumulative GPA fell below the minimal requirements. In addition to students successfully interacting with their peers, it was also important that students form relationships with faculty, administrators, and staff. Deil-Amen (2011) found that students who felt particularly connected with faculty members tended to strengthen their commitment to the particular institution.

In brief, Tinto (1975) asserted that students remain in college when they build connections with others on campus and when they meet the academic standards at that particular college. On the other hand, students tend to drop out when they perceive incongruence between themselves and the collective social climate or academic standards of the institution.

When Pascarella and Chapman (1983) used Tinto's conceptual schema in a quantitative longitudinal study, they found that the students' social integration and academic integration influenced their commitment to the institution and commitment to the goal of graduating. Moreover, they found that the institutional characteristics and students' level of commitment to the goal of graduation directly affected their persistence.

Conceptual Model of Porchea, Allen, Robbins, and Phelps

Today, researchers continue to refer to Tinto's conceptual schema as a foundational model for college retention. Such was the case for Porchea et al. (2010), who collected data from students at 21 community colleges in 13 states in the Midwest over a five-year period. Their quantitative study was designed to determine which student characteristics predicted long-term enrollment and degree outcomes specifically for community college students. Their conceptual model was similar to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema since it connected the predictors to outcomes; however, it did not look at process. The other difference was that Tinto depicted one outcome (i.e., dropout decisions) in his conceptual schema while Porchea et al. presented five possible outcomes: (a) student did not obtain a two-year degree or certificate and transferred to a four-year institution; (b) student still enrolled during their fifth year; (c) student obtained a two-year degree or certificate but did not transfer to four-year institution; (d) student obtained a two-year degree or certificate and transferred to a four-year institution; and (e) student dropped out without obtaining a two-year degree and without transferring to a four-year institution.

Porchea et al. (2010) found that of the 4,481 community college student participants, 21% transferred to a four-year institution without obtaining a two-year degree or certificate, 12% were still enrolled during their fifth year, 11% earned a two-year degree or certificate but did not

transfer to a four-year institution, 8% obtained a degree or certificate and transferred to a four-year institution, and 48% dropped out.

Another major difference between the models developed by Tinto (1975) and Porchea et al. (2010) was the predictors. Tinto basically focused on the student's pre-entry attributes, academic integration, and social integration; whereas, Porchea et al. looked at two general categories of predictors, institutional factors student factors, and many subfactors.

The first predictor, institutional factors, addressed the following school variables: (a) total student enrollment, (b) proportion of students paying in-state tuition to out-of-state tuition, (c) percentage of students receiving financial aid, (d) proportion of full-time faculty to part-time faculty, (e) proportion of minority students to nonminority students, and (f) type of institution (Porchea et al., 2010). In their study, they found that the greater the total student enrollment, the more likely that students would transfer to a four-year institution without obtaining a two-year degree or certificate rather than drop out. Second, they found that the higher the proportion of students paying in-state tuition to students paying out-of-state tuition, the more likely that they would transfer to a four-year institution without obtaining a two-year degree or certificate rather than drop out. Third, the smaller the percentage of students receiving financial aid, the more likely they were still enrolled in their fifth year rather than drop out. Fourth, Porchea et al. (2010) found that the smaller the proportion of full-time faculty members to part-time faculty members, the more likely the students would transfer to a four-year institution without earning a two-year college degree or certificate rather than drop out. They were also more likely to still be enrolled in their fifth year. In addition, the greater the percentage of minority students at that school (i.e., African-American, Hispanics, Asian-American), the more likely that they were still enrolled during their fifth year rather than drop out. Lastly, those attending vocational-technical

colleges were more likely to obtain a two-year degree or certificate but not transfer to a four-year institution in comparison to students attending a community college.

The second general category of predictors, student factors, was subdivided into four subfactors: (a) academic preparation; (b) situational factors; (c) socio-demographic factors; and (d) psychosocial factors (Porchea et al., 2010).

Academic Preparation

Although academic preparation was not the only predictor, much emphasis had been placed on the student's prior academic preparation to predict academic performance, persistence, and degree outcome in college (Porchea et al., 2010). The subfactor of academic preparation was similar to Tinto's (1975) pre-entry attribute of precollege schooling. Porchea et al. (2010) found that students with a higher high-school GPA were more likely to obtain a two-year degree and not transfer to a four-year institution rather than drop out. Furthermore, students with high standardized achievement score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Testing (ACT), or Computer-Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (COMPASS) were more likely to transfer to a four-year institution rather than drop out.

Situational Factor

The situational factors included aspects of the students' lives during their time in college. For example, they highlighted enrollment status (full-time or part-time), degree expectation, work obligations, distance traveled to school, family obligations, financial aid reliance, residential status, delayed enrollment, and whether their parents were alumni of the particular post-secondary institution. Porchea et al. (2010) found that students who were initially registered as full-time students were more likely to obtain a two-year degree compared to those registered as part-time students at matriculation. The study supported a previous claim made by

Prospero and Vohra-Gupta (2007) that students who enrolled full-time had a higher probability of attaining a degree. Porchea et al. also found that students who expected to earn at least a bachelor's degree were more likely to transfer to a four-year institution. It was highly unlikely that they would obtain just a two-year degree and not transfer to a four-year institution. Furthermore, students who worked 15 hours or less were more likely to transfer to a four-year institution without a two-year degree, rather than drop out. Students who worked more hours were less likely to transfer to a four-year institution without a two-year degree. Porchea et al. also found that students, who had to travel far from home to school, obtained a two-year degree and did not transfer to a four-year institution, transferred to a four-year institution without a two-year degree, or was still enrolled in their fifth year. As for the other situational factors, Porchea et al. did not report any significant findings between outcomes and family obligations, financial aid reliance, residential status, parents as alumni, and delayed enrollment. However, in another study done in Hawai‘i, researchers found that students who delayed entry to college had a lower chance of completing a degree program (White Paper Group Committee, 2007).

Socio-Demographic Factor

The socio-demographic factor considered the student's age, ethnicity/race, parents' education level, family's socioeconomic status, gender, and social capital. When it came to age, Porchea et al. (2010) found that older students were more likely to obtain a two-year degree or certificate and not transfer to a four-year institution rather than drop out. They were less likely to transfer to a four-year institution without a two-year degree. As for younger students, they were more likely to transfer to a four-year institution without a two-year degree rather than drop out. Porchea et al. also looked at race and found that African-American students were less likely to obtain a two-year degree without transferring. Furthermore, African-Americans and Hispanic

students had lower academic outcomes in comparison to their white counterparts despite their higher levels of academic engagement. When Porchea et al. considered the parents' education level, they found that that students with college-educated parents who earned at least a bachelor's degree were more likely to still be enrolled in their fifth year or were more likely to transfer to a four-year institution rather than drop out. These students were inclined to attain their degree because their parents understood the demands of college and were able to help their children navigate through college (Prospero & Vohra-Gupta, 2007). In contrast, first-generation students whose parents never earned a college degree were more likely to drop out because the students were unclear about their purpose for being in college, had problems adjusting to college life, or tended to feel isolated. Another finding in the study conducted by Porchea et al. was that students who came from families with greater income were more likely to transfer to a four-year institution than students from lower socioeconomic groups. As for gender, they found that males were less likely to still be enrolled in the same community college after five years. Porchea et al. did not find any significant outcomes related to social capital.

Psychosocial Factor

Porchea et al. (2010) divided the psychosocial factor into three subfactors: (a) motivation, (b) social engagement, and (c) self-regulation. Porchea et al. loosely defined motivation as academic discipline (amount of effort students put into college) and commitment to college (desire to stay in college and earn a degree). Porchea et al. found that students with greater motivation were more likely to obtain a two-year degree and transfer to a four-year college rather than drop out.

Another psychosocial subfactor is social engagement, which focuses on the student's level of connection and involvement with others in the college community, as well as their

willingness to participate in the school's social activities (Le, Cassillas, Robbins, & Langley, 2005; Porchea et al., 2010). In Tinto's (1997) study on social engagement and the retention of community college students, he found that the more students were involved in school, the more likely they were to acquire knowledge and skills, and ultimately persist in college. Contrary to Tinto's findings, Porchea et al. (2010) found that students who were more socially active were less likely to obtain a two-year degree and transfer to a to four-year institution.

The last psychosocial factor in the study by Porchea et al. (2010) is self-regulation, which is defined as the student's academic self-confidence and steadiness. Academic self-confidence is the students' belief that they can perform well in school. They are willing to deal with the academic challenges of college (Le et al., 2005; Porchea et al., 2010). Ironically, Porchea et al. found that students with greater self-confidence about their academic abilities were less likely to obtain a two-year degree, whereas, students with modest self-confidence were more likely to obtain a two-year degree. As for steadiness, Porchea et al. defined it as how effectively students can manage their emotions. They found that steadiness was not significantly predictive of student outcomes. In comparison, Le, Cassillas, Robbins, and Langley (2005) found that steadiness was significantly predictive of not only the students' persistence in college but also their future job performance and persistence.

A typical explanation for the low completion rate at the community college level was that students enrolled in college for different reasons; however, in the study conducted by Porchea et al. (2010), more than 67% of the participants reported their goal was to earn at least a bachelor's degree, 26% aimed for an associate degree, and 7% planned to get a certificate. Hence, the study did not include students who were enrolled to pursue personal interests or non-credit courses.

The strength of the quantitative research study of Porchea et al. (2010) was that it examined six institutional factors and four student factors. By including the two main predictors and numerous subfactors, researchers were able to address the predictors that were typically overlooked. This study was also unique because it addressed previous criticisms that the length of study in the area of student persistence was usually too short a time. By extending the period of time to five years instead of the typical three years (150% of normal time to completion), Porchea et al. were able to capture information about a larger number of community college students and their pathways across multiple institutions. The main limitation of the study was its external validity since the data was a sampling of students from 21 community colleges clustered in the Midwest. Therefore, it was questionable whether their findings were generalizable to the entire U.S.

A few years prior to when Porchea et al. (2010) published their study, Marti (2008) published a latent trajectory analysis examining the differences in the engagement behaviors of community college students. This inductive study was unique because instead of labeling students based on predetermined categories of pathways, Marti used student data to determine common persistence pathways. Marti's aim was to find unobserved student pathways that may have not been detected by previous research methods. He found five distinct patterns of student pathways: (a) full-time, long-term group; (b) two-years-and-out group; (c) long-term decliner group; (d) part-time, long-term group; and (e) one-term-and-out group. The full-time, long-term group and two-years-and-out group were similar except for the fact that the full-time, long-term group of students continued to take classes after two years of college. The long-term decliner group referred to students who had fractured interrupted enrollment at a single institution or across multiple institutions. The part-time, long-term group of students continued to seek

education at a single institution as part-time students. Students in the one-term-and-out group were in college to test whether it was the right place for them. These students tended to drop out soon after entering college or within the school term.

Marti (2008) discovered that community college students did not follow a particular standard timeline; rather they followed a variety of enrollment patterns. Depending on the student's pathway, there were significant differences in engagement when it came to class assignments and collaborative learning. He found that the part-time, long-term group was not as engaged as the full-time, long-term group. The least engaged groups were the one-term-and-out group and the long-term decliner group.

Marti (2008) concluded that students who followed a less efficient pathway tended to be less engaged in college. He suggested that intervention should be tailored for particular groups of students. For example, the one-term-and-out group should receive some type of intervention early in their first term at school. Students who are part of the long-term decliner group should also receive immediate intervention during their first term and continued intervention throughout their stay in college. Marti's suggestion to intervene early and consistently made a lot of sense; however, I questioned how educators would be able to identify which group each student belonged to until after the fact. I also wondered who would have the responsibility or time to categorize the students. What kind of training would this college official need to form an accurate assessment of what students may do during their time in college? In any case, Marti's study highlighted the importance of understanding the different enrollment patterns of students.

Developmental Education at Community Colleges

One of the criticisms of developmental education is that it adds to the problem of retention at the community colleges. Developmental education, which is often used

synonymously with remedial education could be traced back to 1937 when the American Council on Education charged colleges with the task of assisting students to reach their intellectual and holistic potential so that upon completion they could make a contribution to society (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006; Higbee et al., 2005). Hence, developmental education programs typically provided support services such as academic advising, counseling, peer mentoring, and social activities in addition to developmental education courses in reading, math, and writing (Higbee et al., 2005).

Bailey (2009) pointed out that the majority of two-year college students were placed in at least one developmental education course. In fact, in 2007-2008, 41% of two-year college students were enrolled in at least one developmental education course (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). When comparing ethnicities, 53% of American Indian/Alaska Native students, 50% of Black students, 49% of Hispanic students, 45% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, and 43% of Asian students, and 36% of White students were required to take remedial courses. In Hawai'i, the White Paper Group Committee (2007) reported that in Fall 2004, Native Hawaiians (20%) and Filipinos (20%) were the two largest ethnic groups placed in developmental education courses.

The issue was that compared to the general community college population, students who were required to take at least one developmental education course at a community college had a significantly lower graduation rate (Attewell et al., 2006). Within a period of 8.5 years, only 28% of developmental education students earned a two-year college degree compared to 43% of non-developmental education students. The statistics raised the question as to whether developmental education helped or hindered students, a question Attewell, Lavin, Domina, and Levey (2006) responded to.

According to Attewell et al. (2006), the developmental education courses themselves do not cause lower completion rates among developmental education students. In fact, students who passed their developmental education courses were more likely to graduate or transfer to a four-year institution. More specifically, students at the community college who were required to take developmental writing courses and passed their developmental writing courses were 13% more likely to graduate than those who were supposed to take developmental writing but did not. Similarly, students who passed developmental math courses were 11% more likely to graduate. The problem was that these students were not equipped to handle the intensity and load of college-level courses; therefore, developmental education courses were designed to help these students succeed (Fike & Fike, 2008). Bailey (2009) estimated that "two-thirds or more of community college students entered college with academic skills weak enough in at least one major subject area to threaten their ability to succeed in college-level courses" (p. 13). Ultimately, underprepared students who chose not to take developmental education courses contributed to the lower the graduation rates at the community colleges (Attewell et al., 2006).

Opponents of developmental education stated that one of the main disadvantages of forcing student to take these courses was the additional time and money it took students to earn an associate's degree since credits from the remedial courses did not count towards a degree (Attewell et al., 2006). Another problem was that students got lost in the complexity of the series of development courses in both math and English. In fact, only 30% of the developmental math students passed all of the developmental math courses and 68% passed all of the developmental English courses they were required to take. Bailey (2009) analyzed data from 83 community colleges in 15 states that participated in the *Achieving the Dream: Community College Count*. He similarly reported that only 31% of the developmental math students

completed their sequence of math courses and 44% of developmental English students completed their sequence of English courses within three years of initially taking the placement test. In Hawai'i, the White Paper Group Committee (2007) reported that among the Fall 2004 cohort who were enrolled in UHCC, only 31% of students required to take both developmental English and math persisted after four semesters.

Opponents also pointed out that community colleges across the nation were not consistent about their requirements (Bailey & Cho, 2010). Some students whose placement scores indicated they were underprepared for college-level courses were only recommended but not required to take developmental education courses (Bailey, 2009). As expected, most of these students ignored the recommendation and enrolled directly into college-level courses. Depending on how close the students' placement scores were to the cutoff point determined how well they did in these college-level courses.

The debate about the necessity of developmental education and what it should entail continues to rage on. In 2010, Bailey and Cho from the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University declared that the root of the problem was that there were no national consensus about what it meant to be prepared for college. Hence, community colleges using the same assessment tools assigned different cut off scores to determine who was college ready and who needed to take developmental education courses. Furthermore, Bailey and Cho asserted that developmental education courses should at least address the reasons why different students were placed into developmental education. For example, some students had been out of school for a period of time and needed refresher academic courses, some failed to learn a particular academic skill proficiently in high school and still needed to learn basic skills, while others are non-native English speakers engaged in the process of learning academic

English to perform at the college level (Bailey, 2009). All of these students had different problems and they did not necessarily belong in the same developmental education class. Bailey and Cho (2010) argued that the current system was not set up to differentiate the students' needs nor was it set up to tailor instructions to address their specific needs.

Cooling Out Function

While researchers like Tinto (1975) and Porchea et al. (2010) created conceptual models to explain the phenomenon of college dropouts, Clark (1960) used the term "cooling-out" function to explain that dropping out of college was just part of a natural process at higher education institutions in a democratic society.

> Democracy asks individuals to act as if social mobility were universally possible, status to be won by individual effort, and rewards are to accrue to those who try. But democratic societies also need selective training institutions, and hierarchical work organizations permit increasingly fewer persons to succeed at ascending levels. Situations of opportunity are also situations for denial and failure. Thus democratic societies need not only to motivate achievement but also to mollify those denied it in order to sustain motivation in the face of disappointment and to deflect resentment. (Clark, 1960, p. 55).

In other words, community colleges played a vital role in society since it was inherently structured to weed out students who could not pass college level courses through the natural process of withdrawal or dismissal for poor academic performance (Attewell et al., 2006). Americans preferred this "soft denial" or gentle way to "sidetrack unpromising students" (Clark, 1960, p. 57). Attewell et al. (2006) argued that developmental education courses at community colleges acted not only as a gatekeeper, but also as quality control. On one hand, community

colleges were upholding the American value of equality by opening their doors to those 18 years or older to even those underprepared for college. On the other hand, community colleges were also accountable for preserving academic standards by pushing underprepared students to come to their own conclusions about their capacity to handle college-level work and to reconsider their commitment to earning a college degree. Clark (1960) explained that while some underprepared students were able to succeed, most were likely to weed themselves out during the process.

Acknowledging Clark's (1960) point of view that the issue of retention could be a natural weeding out process did not pardon community colleges from resolving the issue of low graduation and transfer rates. Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema and the conceptual model of Porchea et al. (2010) were just starting points toward a better understanding of which student characteristics and institutional features affected the longitudinal process of retention. With the notion that the psychosocial factors of Porchea et al. were a good place to start, this study focused on the psychosocial factor of motivation.

CHAPTER 4. MOTIVATION THEORIES AND CONCEPTS

Brouse, Basch, Le Blanc, McKnight, and Lei (2010) defined motivation as the "urge to push or carry out a specific action or behavior" (p. 1). The concept of motivation is based on the assumption that "people initiate and persist at behaviors to the extent that they believe the behaviors will lead to desired outcomes or goals" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 227). People who expect to attain the same goals will presumably put in the same amount of effort and performance quality in order to achieve the desired outcome; however in reality, this is not the case. Motivation cannot be simply explained as a dichotomy – either the person is motivated or not (Brouse, Basch, Le Blanc, McKnight, & Lei, 2010). In the context of education, Le et al. (2005) stated that motivation is a "psychological characteristic that drive students to engage in the pursuit of academic-related behaviors" (p. 502). Motivation is the key factor that differentiates the outcomes for students with the same level of academic preparation (Le et al., 2005).

Current theories and conceptual models of motivation are premised on individuals being aroused to move toward a particular goal or result (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002, Ryan & Deci, 2000a). They tackle questions about the differences in individual choices, intensity of energy, persistence, emotions, cognition, and the urgency to begin an activity (Woolfolk, 2014a). Moreover, researchers interested in motivation take into consideration the individuals' past experiences, values, and beliefs to explain variations in motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Woolfolk, 2014a).

After reviewing various motivation theories and concepts, I selected five relevant to my research study. They provided an overview of the role that motivation plays in the retention of

community students. They are (a) Maslow's hierarchy, (b) self-determination theory, (c) expectancy-value theory, (d) attribution theory, and (e) self-theory.

Maslow's Hierarchy

Maslow's (1970) hierarchy takes a humanistic approach to motivation. The humanistic approach shares a common belief that people have an internal instinct that drives them to fulfill their intrinsic physiological and psychological needs (Woolfolk, 2014a). According to Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, people are driven to satisfy their lower (deficiency) needs and higher (being) needs. It is premised on the concept of homeostasis where any deviation from equilibrium prompts people to find a way to return to a state of balance where there is "no tension" and "quiescence" (Weiner, 1986, p. 4). Motivation occurs when people experience some sort of physiological or psychological disequilibrium, in other words, they perceive a lack of something that is required for their survival and well being (Taormina & Gao, 2013). When the individuals' particular needs are met, they are able to experience a state of equilibrium; however, this state of balance is temporary since some other need usually pops up (Maslow, 1970).

According to Maslow (1970), one of the major differences between lower and higher needs is that when lower needs are satisfied, people no longer seek fulfillment of those needs. For example, once people have enough to eat, they are no longer motivated to seek more food. It is not to say that lower needs are not cyclical, but at that time the need is satisfied, the person no longer has to focus on fulfilling that need (Weiner, 1986). In contrast, higher needs are never completely satisfied. Individuals continue to strive for higher needs even though that particular need has already been addressed. Maslow's hierarchy arranged the five needs in order of importance. The most basic need is physiological needs, followed by the need for safety, the need for love and belonging, the need for esteem, and self-actualization. Lower needs compose

of physiological needs, the need for safety, and the need for love and belonging, whereas higher needs refer to the need for esteem and self-actualization. Although needs do not emerge isolated at separate times, in general, a need lower on the hierarchy must be somewhat satisfied before people are able to address the next higher need (Lester, Hvezda, Sullivan, & Plourde, 1983).

At the base of the hierarchy, Maslow (1970) listed hunger, thirst, and sex as innate physiological needs that must be fulfilled before any other need is addressed. People need to have enough food and water to maintain a healthy blood stream level. Other researchers later added sleep, adequate temperature, air, nutrients, and physical movement to Maslow's list of physiological needs (Taormina & Gao, 2013).

The second most basic need on Maslow's (1970) hierarchy is the individuals' need for safety. It involves the individuals' need for security, stability, dependency, law and order, protection, as well as, a freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos. Any unfamiliar or threatening stimuli involving war, disease, death, natural catastrophe, crime, or anarchy will motivate individuals to (re)focus their attention on safety (Maslow, 1970; Taormina & Gao, 2013). In 2009-2010, Noltemeyer, Bush, Patton, & Bergen (2012) found that by fulfilling the students' physiological needs (food) and safety needs through better access to health care, dental care, and transportation resulted in students improving their academic skills, cognitive competence, and social competence.

The third most important need on Maslow's (1970) hierarchy is the individuals' need to belong and to be loved. People desire to be accepted, attached, and ultimately loved by others. However, in modern day society with increased mobility, the breakdown of traditional communities, and unstable families, it is more common for people to feel alienated, rootless, depressed, or unloved. Noltemeyer et al. (2012) found that students who felt loved and had a

sense of belonging had higher levels of academic achievement. Still, the need to belong and be loved does not distinguish between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Thus, when the students' need for love and belonging are met by a defiant group of peers, then it is not uncommon for these students to be less willing to adhere to school rules and the teachers' instructions (Woolfolk, 2014a).

Once the individuals' need for love and belonging are met, they are ready to address their need for esteem (Maslow, 1970). There are two kinds of esteem: internal self-esteem (the desire to be strong, worthy, adequate, competent, capable, and independent), and esteem related to the desire to be positively recognized by others in society as prestigious, important, respectable, and dignified.

At the top of Maslow's (1970) hierarchy is the individuals' need for self-actualization. According to Maslow, all other needs lower in the hierarchy have to be at least partially met, but not necessarily 100% satisfied before individuals can focus on their need for self-actualization. Self-actualization is motivated by the individuals' desire to live life fully and to do what they love to do (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Individuals who do not address their need for self-actualization have a sense of longing and uneasiness as if there were more to accomplish (Kunst, 2014). It is what Kunst (2014) referred to as the urge toward growth. Maslow found that those who had achieved self-actualization shared similar characteristics such as being autonomous, problem-centered, empathetic, ethical, spontaneous, accepting, appreciative, and creative.

Critics pointed out that Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, especially his concept of self-actualization was elitist. Working-class people living in lower income neighborhoods and laboring long hours at minimum wage jobs or multiple jobs may never have the opportunity to do something they like to do. That is, they may never be able to address their need for self-

actualization (Pearson & Podeschi, 1999). In fact, the only people in Maslow's study who achieved self-actualization were part of a higher socioeconomic class; they were the social elites and the decision makers in society.

Kunst (2014), a clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst, asserted that people are faced with a dilemma when choosing between self-actualization and safety. People must choose to leave their safety zone and risk feeling insecure in order to experience growth and self-actualization.

> The life instinct is that internal force that pushes us to grow and develop, to take risks that so that we can be all that we can be. Here, growth is prized for the sense of satisfaction, enrichment, and deeper security that it brings. The death instinct is that force within that pulls us toward homeostasis. Here, self-protection is valued more highly than self-development. It is better to hide under the familiar rock and die than to venture out into the unknown world and be killed (Kunst, 2014, p. 33).

Kunst (2014) refuted the idea that people must first satisfy their need for safety before they are able to tackle their need for self-actualization. She argued that individuals actually needed to leave their safety nets behind in order to go after their need for self-actualization since growth and change involved individuals taking risks and operating outside of their comfort zone.

Self-Determination Theory

Similar to Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, the self-determination theory also takes a humanistic approach to motivation. It presumes that people have "inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs that are the basis for their self-motivation and personality integration, as well as for the conditions that foster those positive processes" (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 68).

Innate Psychological Needs

The self-determination theory did not address people's physiological needs or the need for safety like Maslow's hierarchy did, but it did explore motivation by looking at three innate psychological needs that energize people's motivation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991; Weiner, 1986). According to Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan (1991), the three innate psychological needs are (a) the need for competence, (b) the need for autonomy, and (c) the need for relatedness. Individuals have a natural inclination to engage in activities, relationships, and contexts that meet their three psychological needs (Levesque, Zuehlke, Stanek, & Ryan, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

First, people are energized to satisfy their need for competence. This need refers to individuals learning because they are curious about something or because they want to learn a specific skill (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan and Deci 2000a). The need for competence prepares individuals for new situations in a constantly evolving world. Furthermore, the social environment plays an integral part in increasing or decreasing the individuals' motivation by supporting or hindering their psychological needs. For example, optimal challenges and positive feedback during performance motivate people to continue learning by increasing their perceived competency, whereas too easy or too difficult activities and negative feedback decrease people's perceived competency (Deci et al., 1991; Woolfolk, 2014a). People are more likely to participate in activities where they feel competent yet challenged, and less likely to engage in activities where there is a high possibility for failure or feelings of incompetence. Individuals are drawn to being "effective in dealing with their environment" (Deci, 1995, p. 65). Similar to Maslow's (1970) idea that higher needs can never be completely satisfied, the individuals' need for competence can be perpetual leading them into an upward spiral of new challenges and mastery

(Stipek, 2002). With that being said, simply fulfilling the individuals' need for competence is not enough to sustain motivation. The need for autonomy is equally important when it comes to motivating individuals to improve their level of competency.

The need for autonomy refers to individuals being involved in activities that allow them to initiate, determine, and regulate things by themselves (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Milyavskaya & Koestner, 2010). People seek the ability to control their own lives; they detest being controlled by others and being forced into doing things (Stipek, 2002). Individuals want to decide what tasks to take on, when to do them, and how to behave in particular situations. For that reason, it is ideal to let students take part in the decision making process when designing tasks and scheduling deadlines. Those who are given choices to pursue activities they feel competent in tend to experience growth and want to persist. By contrast, individuals controlled by external rules, deadlines, demands, limitations, and negative feedback are inclined to feel less motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). In the context of higher education, autonomous college students were found to have acquired more knowledge, developed their ability to problem solve, and gained a greater sense of self-worth and social responsibility than those who lacked autonomy (Deci et al., 1991).

Third, people are energized to behave in ways that fulfill their need for relatedness. The need for relatedness alludes to the individual's need to develop secure and close connections with others in society (Deci et al., 1991; Milyavaskaya & Koestner, 2010; Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006). "People not only need to be effective and free; they also need to feel connected with others in the midst of being effective and autonomous" (Deci, 1995, p. 88). In college, relatedness is usually measured by the quantity and quality of time, energy, and effort students invest in educationally relevant activities, as well as the relationships they are able to build with

faculty, staff, administrators, and peers (Greene et al., 2008; Junco, Heibergert, & Loken, 2010; Kuh et al., 2008; Pike et al., 2011). Because of the open door policy at community colleges, some students question their legitimacy and ability to do college-level work. For this reason, fulfilling the students' need for relatedness also helps with their need for competence. Community college students tend to rely on others on campus such as their instructors and fellow classmates to reassure them that they should be in college and are capable of meeting the college's academic standards (Deil-Amen, 2011; Tinto, 1997).

Furthermore, Deil-Amen (2011) found that college students were encouraged when they met other students like themselves who shared similar academic and career goals. They were relieved to discover that their peers had the same concerns and fears about college as they did. The students benefited from knowing others who could give them advice about relevant classes, good instructors, graduation requirements, and registration procedures. In contrast, students who were not socially engaged had a greater chance of succumbing to their feelings of alienation, isolation, lack of belonging, and lack of competency (Deil-Amen, 2011; Kuh et al., 2008). In general, institutions do their part by providing a variety of social activities so that students can meet and interact with others on campus. Typical activities offered to students include first-year seminar, learning communities, student orientation, study groups, student associations, advising, mentoring, peer tutoring, internships, on-campus employment, service learning, and extra-curricular activities (Junco et al., 2010; Kuh et al., 2008). The overall campus environment sets the mood for students to experience an inclusive or exclusive social system inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, it is up to the administrators, faculty members, advisors, and other staff members to foster a positive institutional environment that will enable students to experience a strong sense of relatedness (Schuetz, 2008).

The importance of social engagement for commuter students is different from that of residential students (Deil-Amen, 2011). Residential college students are away from their family and friends, and therefore, make it a priority to get involved in school activities and develop friendships on campus. In contrast, commuter students, who usually remain in their hometowns, are not as concerned about developing intimate friendships at college because much of their existing social network in the community with family and friends are in tact. By the same token, since many commuter students have multiple external obligations (e.g., family obligations, work obligations) that are equally as important to them as college, they tend to spend minimal time on campus. Hence, the classroom may be the only place where their three innate psychological needs can be addressed (Deci et al., 1991; Deil-Amen, 2011).

Prior studies examined how others on campus affected the students' level of relatedness. Deil-Amen's (2011) empirical study introduced the idea that it was essential for students to form relationships with faculty, staff, and administrators who could act as institutional agents and successfully help them navigate the college system. Of those she interviewed, Deil-Amen found that 92% of the students claimed that institutional agents were instrumental in adjusting to college life and persisting. In college, it was not uncommon for students to need help with personal or procedural issues such as registering for a class, applying for scholarships and financial aid, or adding and dropping classes. For persistent risk students, these setbacks and obstacles could be overwhelming and frustrating sometimes to the point of them wanting to give up. However, when an institutional agent, such as a well-connected faculty member, advisor, counselor, or staff member get involved and help the student negotiate procedural obstacles, then the student feels worthy of attention and empowered because someone in the system has taken interest in their welfare. Students in the study reported that institutional agents were key to

building their confidence and identities as college students. Institutional agents encourage students to continue to pursue their academic goals at that particular postsecondary institution.

In another study, Karp, Hughes, and O'Gara (2010) stressed the importance of information networks. Information networks are described as social ties that students have with faculty members, advisors, staff members, and peers. People in the students' information network transmit information about procedures, classes, and ways to overcome unexpected obstacles. Karp et al. found that 84% of the students who said that they felt like they belonged in college were part of an information network; whereas only 8% of students who did not feel socially integrated were part of an information network. Participants in the study said that it was their information network that kept them in the loop and made college manageable.

Lundberg's (2014) study found that the strongest predictor of learning was not the community college students' engagement with peers or student organizations, but their personal connection with faculty members. Faculty members are in a unique position to design curriculum and use methods to address the students' need for relatedness since they can create pluralistic curricula, choose culturally sensitive teaching methods, and assign students to work in interracial groups to promote intergroup contact (Allport, 1954; Deil-Amen, 2011; Greene et al., 2008). Faculty members can also become involved in the students' academic success by giving them personalized attention outside of the classroom, encouraging them to express themselves, providing them with positive feedback, and allowing them to make mistakes without feeling embarrassed (Deil-Amen, 2011; Greene et al., 2008). In addition, instructors can foster the students' sense of belonging by reminding them about administrative procedures such as registration, last day to add or drop a class, and financial aid deadlines. Some faculty members may be willing to do extra and attend social activities (e.g., seminars, films, cultural festivals,

plays) with their students. Generally speaking, proactive faculty members who promote social integration tend to look more like the students' friend since they go out of their way to become familiar with the students' personal life and future plans (Deil-Amen, 2011).

Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) set out to investigate the correlation between the self-determination theory's three psychological needs and student engagement. They began by parsing out what student engagement actually referred to. They decided that it involved behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. Behavioral engagement referred to a student's positive conduct, involvement in learning and academic tasks, and participation in school activities. As for emotional engagement, it addressed the student's emotional response in class. Lastly, cognitive engagement referred to the student's psychological investment in learning, self-regulation, learning strategies, and preference for a challenge. In their study, Fredricks et al. found that meeting the students' need for relatedness and need for autonomy was correlated with positive behavioral and emotional engagement, while meeting the students' need for competence was correlated with positive behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Intrinsic Motivation, Amotivation, and Extrinsic Motivation

The three innate psychological needs are linked to three types of motivation: intrinsic motivation, amotivation, and extrinsic motivation (Brouse et al., 2010; Deci et al., 1991). The category of extrinsic motivation is further divided into four types of behavioral regulations: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation.

The first type of motivation is intrinsic motivation. It refers to individuals voluntarily engaging in activities because they find it inherently interesting and not because there is an external reward or a looming punishment (Deci et al., 1991). Intrinsic motivation represents the

highest degree of self-determination; it is often used as a prototype for self-determined forms of motivation (Brouse et al., 2010; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Deci et al., 1991). People are intrinsically motivated to perform when they are genuinely interested in the activity itself; that is, participation in the activity brings them satisfaction and pleasure (Deci et al., 1991). This is most evident when observing young children play. The act of playing is not a means to an end rather the act in itself is the reward (Woolfolk, 2014a). The child is naturally active, curious, and willing to learn and grow without any rewards or threats attached (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Intrinsic motivation usually occurs when all three innate psychological needs are satisfied (Deci et al., 1991; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). The innate psychological need for autonomy, relatedness, and competence are fulfilled when individuals choose to engage in activities that are suitable to their personal sense of self (Brouse et al., 2010; Deci et al., 1991; Prospero & Vohra-Gupta, 2007). In other words, when individuals autonomously pursue their interests, their level of competency improves and they perceive a sense of belonging as they continue to receive positive feedback from others, which in turn motivates them to continue to persist in their interest (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). It is important to note that individuals who feel secure and are surrounded by supportive others are the ones who generally tend to fully engage in activities they find inherently interesting (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intrinsically motivated college students are said to reach higher levels of academic achievement. They are genuinely interested in understanding the subject of study. In reality, it is more common to find college students who are extrinsically motivated than intrinsically motivated. Extrinsically motivated college students are driven to get high grades, earn a degree, please significant others, qualify for a position, or avoid negative consequences (Woolfolk, 2014a).

Extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation are not a dichotomy but they are on a continuum spectrum of motivation (Stipek, 2002). Actually, on the opposite end of the spectrum from intrinsic motivation is amotivation. In the case of amotivated students, there is clearly a lack of intention to act. Their three psychological needs have not been met (Deci et al., 1991). Amotivation occurs when a person acts upon something that is not self-determined. Furthermore, the person perceives no sense of satisfaction and expects no external reward for his or her behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Prospero & Vohra-Gupta, 2007). Since that the locus of causality is external and individuals are unable to control the outcomes, then it is not surprising that they feel helpless and act in impersonal ways toward the situation (Brouse et al., 2010; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Individuals constantly ask the question, "Why am I doing this?" Amotivated students see no reason to engage in the activity except for the fact that someone is forcing them to do it. They will stop participating in the activity as soon as the external force is removed (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992).

The third type of motivation, extrinsic motivation, is positioned in the middle between intrinsic motivation and amotivation. Under the category of extrinsic motivation, Deci et al. (1991) explained that there are four types of behavior regulation varying by degree of internalization: (a) external regulation, (b) introjected regulation, (c) identified regulation, and (d) integrated regulation.

Four Types of Extrinsic Motivation

In general, extrinsic motivation is characterized by the individual's lack of interest in the activity itself, seeing the activity only as a means to an end. In other words, in each of the four types of behavior regulations under the category of extrinsic motivation, the individual performs the activity because it is instrumental to attaining or avoiding a separate external consequence

(Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000b; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006; Woolfolk, 2014a). This the key difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

In the spectrum of extrinsic motivation, external regulation is the farthest away from intrinsic motivation and the one that most resembles amotivation. The cause of the behavior is external, observable, and measureable in terms of rewards and punishments (Deci et al., 1991; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992; Woolfolk 2014a). Externally regulated individuals perceive the activity as uninteresting and without value; still, they have enough competence to be able to perform the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992). In terms of higher education, externally regulated students tend to exhibit minimal cooperation, minimal effort, and increased negativity (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). They are quick to blame others for any negative consequences since they refuse to take responsibility for the outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). When the external reward is removed, individuals cease their behavior because they have no reason to continue an activity they do not believe in. The difference between amotivation and external regulation is that people who are externally regulated know why they are engaged in the behavior. In comparison, amotivated people do not see any connection between their actions and external rewards.

The second type of behavior regulation is introjected regulation where the locus of causality is external, but the behavior is internally driven (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b). Here, individuals have moderately internalized the extrinsically contingent values and behaviors but they have not accepted it as their own (Deci et al., 1991; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). They struggle with the tension of internalizing values and behaviors that is not inherently worthwhile to them (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992). For that reason, they tend to impose rewards and constraints on themselves. For example, they feel guilty and anxious when they do not engage in

the activity, and shameful when they fail. Students who are introjectedly regulated tend to be anxious and self-blaming. They pressure themselves to act in a particular way because there is some promised reward attached to the behavior (e.g., good grade, praise from parent). Individuals have some level of competency to perform the activity and show notable signs of relatedness to those nudging them to internalize the extrinsically contingent values or behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Nevertheless, the values and behaviors are not self-determined; hence, the individuals will most likely discontinue the behavior in the long run (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Identified regulation, the third type of behavior regulation, is one of two regulations referred to as autonomous extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci 2000a). Individuals perform the once extrinsically contingent behavior willingly since they somewhat identify with it and accept it as their own (Deci et al., 1991). As a result, individuals have a positive attitude about performing the activity and are more willing to accept responsibility for the outcomes than those with introjected regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992). Autonomous extrinsic motivation (i.e., identified regulation, integrated regulation) is associated with higher levels of academic achievement and persistence (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Lastly, the fourth type of behavioral regulation most reflective of intrinsic motivation is integrated regulation (Deci et al., 1991). This type of extrinsic motivation is also referred to as an autonomous extrinsic motivation. Individuals have chosen to thoroughly internalize the extrinsically contingent values and behaviors into their own set of values and beliefs (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b). That means when they have the opportunity to make a choice, they choose to engage in the activity because they believe that the activity is worth their time. Individuals exhibit high levels of engagement, better performance, greater psychological well-being, higher quality of conceptual understanding, and greater persistence in comparison to

those with external regulation, introjected regulation, or identified regulation (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b). Nevertheless, these individuals are not acting out of inherent interest for the activity; they perceive their behavior as instrumental to reaching a goal or a desired separate outcome (e.g., earn a degree, qualify for a position, be accepted into a particular academic program). Hence, integrated regulation is still classified as extrinsic motivation and not intrinsic motivation.

In a quantitative research study focused on assessing student motivation toward educational activities, Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay (1997) found that public high school students who dropped out expressed lower levels of intrinsic motivation and autonomous extrinsic motivation. They were the ones who said their parents, teachers, and school administrators were not autonomy supportive. Vallerand et al. concluded that students who dropped out did not have their need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy met in the context of schooling.

Vallerand and Bissonette (1992) had previously conducted a quantitative research study at a French Canadian junior college. They found a connection between those who persisted and the students who were initially intrinsically motivated or who had autonomous extrinsic motivation. Students who initially identified as being amotivated tended to drop out. The researchers concluded that the student's type of motivation mattered. Intrinsic motivation and autonomously extrinsic motivation led to greater persistence in junior college.

Process of Internalization

The process of internalization does not involve extrinsically motivated learners suddenly becoming intrinsically motivated learners, nor does it mean that learners must painstakingly pass through each type of behavioral regulation in the extrinsic motivation spectrum in order to reach the position of integrated regulation (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Internalization is a

process where individuals "transform regulation by external contingencies into regulation by internal processes" (Deci et al., 1991, p. 328). It is facilitated in social environments that allow individuals to fulfill their need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These conducive social environments are referred to as autonomy supportive environments. That means learners tend to better internalize extrinsically contingent values and behaviors when they are given their autonomy and when others acknowledge their feelings and perspectives (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Parents play a role in the child's contextual environment (Deci et al., 1991). Controlling parents tend to oppress their children's intrinsic interests and deny their children the opportunity to fulfill their own sense of autonomy and self-determination. In contrast, autonomy supportive parents encourage their children to explore and define their own interests. These parents provide an environment that supports internalization through choice, positive feedback, and constant support (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). As a result, students who have autonomy-supportive parents are more likely to remain curious and develop intrinsic motivation or autonomous extrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1991).

Similarly, autonomy supportive teachers refrain from controlling the students; instead, they provide their students with the chance to explore and grow through optimal challenges (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000b, Levesque et al., 2004; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006; Woolfolk, 2014a). They encourage the students' inherent curiosity and creativity, offer continuous support, and provide timely positive feedback about their competency. Students with autonomy-supportive teachers are more likely to be associated with intrinsic or autonomous extrinsic motivation, increased competency, and a higher level of self-esteem (Deci et al., 1991). When teachers are put into a position where they lack the opportunity for self-determination due

to domineering administrators, oppressive school policies, autocratic government agencies, and overbearing parents, they become more controlling over their students' learning process in order to meet the externally imposed requirements. As a result, students are less inclined to experience internalization in this controlled environment and are more likely to remain externally regulated (Deci et al., 1991; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006).

A controlled learning environment is created when teachers increase the level of competition among students, threaten students, offer extrinsic rewards, use controlling and extreme language, impose goals and deadlines without student input, and habitually criticize the students (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006; Woolfolk, 2014a). Vansteenkiste, Lens and Deci (2006) found that instead of internalizing the external regulations and improving academic achievement, controlled students exhibited lower levels of achievement; higher levels of learning, behavioral, and emotional problems; and lower levels of persistence.

Vansteenkiste et al. (2006) conducted an empirical study to find out whether goal framing made a difference in the students' learning process and persistence. Intrinsic goal framing describes an autonomy supportive school environment, which encourages students to make choices, pursue intrinsic interests, and solve problems. Moreover, in intrinsic goal framing, instructors openly discuss the rationale and value of learning a particular topic or subject. In contrast, extrinsic goal framing refers to a controlled environment that disregards the students' three innate psychological needs. Goals and constraints are imposed and students are expected to learn by memorization. In their study, Vansteenkiste et al. pointed out that different college majors inherently emphasized different goal content. For example, in the College of Business, most students' goals involved becoming financially successful (extrinsic goal). By contrast,

students enrolled in the College of Education were seeking the personal satisfaction of making a difference in other people's lives (intrinsic goal). The researchers' question was whether matching extrinsically motivated students to the College of Business and matching intrinsically motivated students to the College of Education meant that students would be unaffected by goal framing. They found that regardless of whether students were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated and despite their majors, extrinsic goal framing undermined the students' learning process and persistence, while intrinsic goal framing encouraged academic achievement and persistence.

Expectancy-Value Theory

Atkinson

In comparison to Maslow (1970), and Deci and associates' (1991) humanistic approach to motivation, Atkinson's (1957) expectancy-value theory takes a social cognitive approach to motivation. Generally speaking, social cognitive theories are premised on the belief that people are more than driven by their internal instincts; they are human agents who proactively explore their options within the environment; synthesize newly acquired knowledge; make predictions; generate complex patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors; self-reflect; evaluate the consequences of their actions; and construct new thoughts and behaviors for future courses of action (Bandura, 1999; Miller 2011; Stipek, 2002).

In the case of the expectancy-value theory, Atkinson (1957) asserted that that the strength of an individual's motivation, that is, the vigor of an individual's response and degree of persistence to a chosen task is determined by the amalgamation of (a) the individual's strength of expectancy, (b) the value of incentive, and (c) the strength of motive. Generally speaking, individuals, who perceive that a particular act is instrumental to attaining a goal, are motivated to

persist and perform. Hence, the difference in individual levels of motivation can be attributed to variations in these three factors.

The first factor, strength of expectancy, refers to the subjective probability that in a particular situation certain acts will bring about specific consequences (Atkinson, 1957; Atkinson, Bastian, Earl, & Litwin, 1960). Thus, people are motivated to act in expectation of attaining a particular outcome. People with positive functions of expectancy are attracted to the possibility of success relative to the difficulty of the task; whereas, those with a negative function of expectancy are preoccupied with the probability of failure based on the level of difficulty of the task.

The second factor in the equation, incentive, alludes to how appealing or valuable the task-related goal appears to the individual in a given situation. People tend to get satisfaction from task-related goals that bring about feelings of achievement, power, influence, affiliation, satisfaction, accomplishments, and belonging (Atkinson, 1957). According to Atkinson, Bastian, Earl, and Litwin (1960), there is an inverse linear function in the strength of expectancy of success. That is to say, when the task is easy and the probability of success is high, the incentive value of success is low; however, when the task is difficult and the probability of success is low, then the incentive value of success is high (Atkinson, 1957). In brief, incentive refers to having more satisfaction or value in accomplishing something difficult rather than something easy.

Although the theory is referred to as the expectancy-value theory, there is a third factor in Atkinson's (1957) equation. The final factor, motive or "energizing drive," concerns the individuals' disposition to either strive to achieve success and "maximize satisfaction" or strive to avoid failure and "minimize pain" (Atkinson, 1957, p. 360). According to Atkinson, for those striving to achieve success at a given task, the highest point of motivation is when the task is at

an intermediate level of difficulty where the probability of success is 50%. The strength of motivation decreases when the probability of success decreases from 50% to 0% since there is no incentive to engage in activities that will undeniably result in failure. One's interest in the task diminishes. The strength of motivation also decreases when the probability of success increases from 50% to 100% since easier tasks increase the certainty of success and lowers the incentive value of success. In this case, there is no satisfaction or value in succeeding at a task that is too easy and achievable by all. Those striving to achieve success are motivated to prove their competency in comparison to others (Anderman, Austin, & Johnson, 2002). Moreover, once individuals succeed and master the designated task, they tend to seek more challenging tasks, thereby shifting the point of maximum approach motivation upwards.

Conversely, those with a strong motive to avoid failure will make every attempt to avoid situations connected with failure, pain, shame, and humiliation (Atkinson, 1957). They try to avoid displaying their level of incompetency to others (Anderman et al., 2002). Generally speaking, they have a negative disposition for the results of the tasks. However, if the consequences of avoiding the task are more negative than actually performing the task, then individuals will reluctantly perform the task. Unlike people with a strong achievement motive, those with the motive to avoid failure will try to dodge the intermediate difficult task, where the probability of success is 50% since at this point the only way to avoid failure is to succeed. Instead, people with a motive to avoid failure will choose the least threatening tasks where their chances of success is very high or the most difficult improbable tasks where their chances for success is very low. These two extreme choices ensure that they will either most likely succeed at the easy task and avoid shame and humiliation, or fail at the extremely difficult task and still preserve their self-dignity since no one would blame them for failing.

Atkinson et al. (1960) studied 66 male sophomores and juniors at the University of Michigan. They divided the male students into two groups (high achievers and low achievers) based on their measurement of achievement. When the researchers observed the participants playing basketball, they found that students in the high achievement group chose to shoot from an intermediate distance, while students in the low achievement group shot from the farthest point. The differences in choice was not due to the their relative expectancy of success since high achievers showed higher expectancies of success (68% expected to beat other students) than low achievers (35% expected to beat the other students). The researchers concluded that while high achievers welcomed feasible challenges just above their level of ability, low achievers avoided intermediate risks and chose long shots so that their failure would not result in self-blame and humiliation.

Wigfield and Eccles

Wigfield and Eccles' (2000) expectancy-value theory was based on studies involving students in elementary, junior high, and high school. Influenced by other achievement motivation theories, Eccles and Wigfield's (2002) expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation revised and expanded upon Atkinson's (1957) expectancy-value theory. They criticized Atkinson's assertion that the incentive to achieve success is an inverse linear function of expectancy and value. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) said that the inverse linear function "provides a limited view of the nature of incentive values" (p. 5). Rather than an inverse relationship, Eccles and Wigfield asserted that there is actually a positive relationship between expectancy and value; that is, "individuals' choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by their beliefs about how well they will do on the activity and the extent to which they value the activity" (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000, p. 68).

Wigfield and Eccles (1992) also questioned Atkinson's (1957) definition of incentive. Atkinson defined incentive as the value placed upon a task-related goal; however, upon closer look at his definition, he equated incentive to task difficulty. His description of incentive failed to take into account other possible values that could motivate people to engage in the task. In order to address this weakness, Wigfield and Eccles (1992) expanded the definition of incentive to include four other values: cost value, attainment value, intrinsic value, and utility value.

First, cost value refers to the cost of engaging in a particular task; that is, choosing to do one activity usually means limiting or forgoing one's engagement in another activity of value. The cost of engaging in the chosen activity is determined by how valuable the resigned activity ranks in the individuals' hierarchy of priorities. Another key point is that when determining costs, individuals reflect on the amount of effort required and appraise their anxiety level. The greater their fear of failure and the more energy they need to exert to accomplish the task, then the higher the cost of engaging in the particular activity.

Second, Eccles and Wigfield (2002) defined attainment value as the importance of individuals performing well on a particular task to outwardly display how competent they perceive themselves to be. Attainment values tend to determine how long people will persist at a task. By selecting a particular task, individuals have the opportunity to "confirm or disconfirm salient aspects of one's self-schema" (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, p. 16). How well they actually do on the task in comparison to how well they thought they could do influences their concept of self (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002).

Third, intrinsic value refers to the enjoyment or satisfaction level one gets when performing a task (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Put simply, individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to engage in tasks they consider interesting. Wigfield and Eccles (1992)

reported that among junior high students, their intrinsic value in math was a better predictor than their expectations in determining who would continue to take higher math courses in the future. They concluded that intrinsic value impacts the individual's choices.

Fourth, utility value refers to activities that are not interesting or satisfying, but are necessary to achieve long-term goals (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). In other words, people will persist at an activity because it is a means to an end. Utility value accounts for students who persist at uninteresting readings and assignments in prerequisite classes in order to get into a competitive academic program in the future.

Besides addressing Atkinson's (1957) concept of incentives, Eccles and Wigfield (2002) also expanded on Atkinson's notion of outcome expectancy. Referring to Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy, Eccles and Wigfield claimed that expectancy for success at a specific task was based on the individuals' efficacy expectations. It was even more than just the probability that a particular act would bring about a predictable consequence. Efficacy expectations refer to individuals believing that in a specific domain they have the capability to personally perform a particular act that will bring about a desirable outcome (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Bandura emphasized that individuals' efficacy expectations are based on self-standards that individuals believe they can achieve; whereas, Wigfield and Eccles (2002) went one step further and claimed that individuals' efficacy expectations were dependent upon their past performances in comparison to other people's performances.

Wigfield and Eccles (2000) found that the students' efficacy expectancies changed throughout their primary and secondary school years. As the students got older, they began to believe that they were less competent in more domains resulting in an increasingly narrow and specific range of efficacy expectancy of success. Part of the reason was because students

became more proficient at making sense of the evaluative feedback from their teachers, and realistic about their abilities as they compared themselves to their peers. In addition, upper grade level teachers were more inclined to incorporate friendly competition into their teaching method, believing that it was a way to motivate students. Students used the results from the competitions to get a better idea of where they stood in comparison to others. Those who did relatively poorly began to lower their achievement beliefs to match their unfavorable outcomes.

A limitation of my use of the expectancy-value theory of achievement was that it was originally developed to better understand early adolescents and adolescents' performances. Eccles and Wigfield's (2002) studies did not involve students past twelfth grade. Therefore, one of my assumptions when using this model to analyze college students was that the model could be generalized to older students past high school.

A general critique of the expectancy-value theory was that "people are not as systematic in considering alternative courses of action and in weighing their likely consequences as expectancy-value models assume" (Bandura, 1988, p. 39). Bandura (1988) questioned the assumption that people explore all of their alternatives, clearly define their alternatives, and logically prioritize their alternatives according to their values and beliefs. Instead, Bandura (1988) alleged that people were inclined to choose from a limited number of options that came to mind, relied on readily attainable but not necessarily accurate information to define their alternatives and outcomes, and used "simplifying decision strategies that may lead them to select alternatives that differ from those they would have had they weighed and ordered the various factors as presupposed by the maximizing model" (p. 39).

Relevance of Bandura's Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model and Self-Efficacy

It was necessary to include Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy since this was one of the main differences between Wigfield and Eccles (2000) efficacy expectancy and Atkinson's (1957) outcome expectancy. In Bandura's (1999) triadic reciprocal causation model, self-efficacy falls under the category of personal factors. Personal factor is one of three determinants in the triadic reciprocal model. The other two determinants that reciprocally interact with personal factors are environment and behavioral patterns. Each determinant reciprocally influences and is influenced by the other two determinants. This triadic reciprocal causation model is premised on Bandura's theoretical framework of the social cognitive theory.

Environment. Environment affects the nature of interaction among all determinants. Bandura (1999) differentiated among four environments: imposed environment, selected environment, construed environment, and fortuity. At times, individuals find themselves in what Bandura called an imposed environment where people are unable to control what is happening to them physically or socioculturally. They are not there by choice. Situated in an imposed environment, people maintain their human agency by proactively choosing how they will react to the situation. According to Devonport and Lane (2006), when faced with a stressful imposed environment, people turn to cognitive appraisal, primary appraisal, and secondary appraisal. That is, individuals are inclined to evaluate their environment, determine how it affects their well being (cognitive appraisal), and predict the implications of the effects (primary appraisal). Then in a secondary appraisal, they decide what they are going to do about the situation in order to minimize harm and improve their possibility for a positive outcome. Those with healthy coping strategies attempt to control their emotional response to the stress and alter aspects of the environment causing the stress; whereas, those without healthy coping strategies resort to

maladaptive coping strategies such as denial, drugs, or alcohol to deal with the imposed environment.

At other times, individuals find themselves in selected environments where they have the flexibility to exercise their human agency by specifically choosing to be a part of a setting through associations, activities, and events (Bandura, 1999). In other words, people choose which activities to participate in and with whom to associate (Miller, 2011). For instance, some college students may select to participate in a robotics club where they can interact with others interested in robots. Although musically inclined, they may choose not to participate in concert band or associate with former friends from band. According to the concept of reciprocal relationships, not only are the determinants of personal factors and behavioral patterns evident in the individuals' choice of activity but the factor of selected environment reciprocally influences their personal factors and behavioral patterns such that individuals begin to think and act more like others in their selected environment.

The third environment, the construed environment, refers to social environments and institutional systems organized, planned for, and implemented by the people themselves (Bandura, 1999). Here, people employ their human agency not by selecting what is already available, but by producing their own social systems.

The fourth type of environment is fortuity (Bandura, 1999). It is unique because it deals with coincidental situations that have the capacity to launch individuals onto a new pathway. As human agents, people do not simply react to such fortuitous events; rather, they have the capacity to generate and shape strategic responses to the unexpected event such that it brings about favorable results in the future.

Behavioral pattern. The other determinant in the triadic reciprocal model is behavioral pattern. It refers to all of the verbs in the English language; that is, how people behave or act (Bandura, 1999; Miller, 2011). As the environment affects behavioral patterns, behavioral patterns also affect people's environment and how others respond to them because of their behavior. Moreover, personal factors also affect behavioral patterns and are affected by behavioral patterns.

Personal factor. The last determinant in the triadic reciprocal model is personal factor (Miller, 2011). It includes the person's personality, cognition, emotions, needs, culture, expectations, knowledge, beliefs, goals, characteristics, attitudes, values, and most importantly self-efficacy (Bandura, 1999; Miller, 2011). It is this subfactor of self-efficacy that Eccles and Wigfield (2002) referred to in their expectancy-value theory.

Self-Efficacy. According to Bandura (1999), the concept of self-efficacy rest upon the assumption that people are self-directing human agents who are intentionally forward thinking in dealing with their environment and are able to regulate, reflect, and adjust their person and behavior accordingly to produce the desired outcomes. Thus, self-efficacy is described as the belief that one has the capacity to effectively organize and perform a cognitive, emotional, and behavioral course of action in a context specific domain so that it generates a desired effect (Bandura, 1998, 1999). For that reason, the individual is willing to persist despite temporary setbacks and failures (Miller, 2011; Woolfolk, 2014b).

Bandura (1988) argued that effort is not synonymous with self-efficacy. Effort refers to how hard people work and how much energy is necessary to succeed. It is just one aspect that governs performance; whereas, self-efficacy includes effort as well as specialized knowledge,

skills, past experiences, resourcefulness, and the adaptability to meet new challenges in that domain.

Self-efficacy does not refer to outcome expectancy but to efficacy expectancy (Bandura, 1977). Outcome expectancy, what Atkinson (1957) defined as expectations, is the belief that particular behaviors will result in certain outcomes; whereas, efficacy expectation involves the individuals' belief that they have the ability to execute the behavior necessary to achieve the desired outcome in a particular domain (Bandura, 1977; Eccles and Wigfield, 2002). Wigfield and Eccles (2000) said, "Efficacy expectations are more predictive of performance and choice than are outcome expectations" (p. 71).

High self-efficacy. People with high self-efficacy tend to believe that they have the skills and cognitive ability to strategically accomplish their goals in a particular domain (Bandura, 1998). When they encounter adversity and setbacks in an imposed environment, these people are focused on getting past the obstacle to master the challenge and persevere long enough to achieve their goals. In general, they are able to keep their anxiety level somewhat low and manageable. Along the way, people with high self-efficacy are constantly honing their skills and increasing their knowledge about what works and what does not work, making them more capable in the future to convert uncomfortable unfamiliar environments into more manageable ones. When individuals with high self-efficacy do fail, they attribute their failure to a lack of effort, inadequate strategies, or an uncontrollable situation. Failure in a domain has nothing to do with their abilities, skills, and aptitude. People with high self-efficacy are not hesitant about taking advantage of fortuitous events, selecting environments, or even construing their own environments in order to gain access to more challenging goals within the domain.

Low self-efficacy. In contrast, people with low self-efficacy conclude that their present failures in a particular domain are due to a lack of ability that will not change in the future (Bandura, 1999). They doubt that they have the capacity to control the outcome of the situation. They are unable to fully utilize their human agency. When faced with obstacles or setbacks, people with low self-efficacy tend to decrease their effort, give up, or accept their fate in their imposed environment. Since much of their effort is spent on being emotionally distressed and anxious about the situation, people with low self-efficacy lack the energy to strategically develop plans to overcome the challenges. Instead of focusing on mastering the task, they are overwhelmed visualizing all the possible failures and defeats. As a result, people with low self-efficacy tend to shy away from selecting or construing environments that may be beyond their capacity in that domain. Instead, they limit themselves within in their imposed environments where they have little options and minimal control. Since they attribute their failures to their lack of ability or skill, they find themselves at a standstill or spiraling downwards as they continue to underperform and underutilize their skills and talents in that domain. Low self-efficacy and high self-efficacy are not dichotomous; rather, self-efficacy slides on a scale and is specific to a domain. Hence, it is not uncommon for people to have high self-efficacy in one domain but low self-efficacy in another domain.

Devonport and Lane (2006) researched the relationship between self-efficacy and coping with stress and challenges at a British university. They found that students with high self-efficacy specifically in managing time coped with stress by planning. They used strategies such as dividing the task into manageable units and setting realistic intermediate goals. Those with a high self-efficacy to specifically work in groups dealt with stress by interacting with others and venting their emotions. Students with a high self-efficacy to specifically do well in lectures and

to communicate well with others coped with stress by planning and seeking social support. Moreover, the students' self-efficacy scores accurately predicted 81.3% of those who would drop out. Those with low self-efficacy scores in the areas of working well in lectures, utilizing resources, managing time, and working in groups were most at risk of dropping out.

Attribution Theory

Weiner studied under Atkinson and inevitably knew the expectancy-value theory well. Unlike Eccles and Wigfield who elaborated on Atkinson's theory, Weiner branched off from the expectancy-value theory to create his own theory (Weiner, 1986). There were several issues Weiner had with Atkinson's expectancy-value theory. First, Weiner (1986) said that other than believing that "organisms strive to increase pleasure and to decrease pain," Atkinson failed to account for emotions (p. 5). Weiner argued that emotions could not be ignored because they played a vital part in motivation; in fact, he believed that there was an indisputable relationship among cognition, emotions, and behavior.

Second, Weiner (1986) faulted Atkinson for categorizing people as striving to achieve success or striving to avoid failure in a specific domain. Weiner said that the problem was that the labels were not stable but depended on the situation. Weiner (1986) argued that "it [would] be more fruitful to search first for general laws rather than explore Person x Situation interactions" (p. 11) when developing a theory of motivation.

Third, Weiner (1986) pointed out that the expectancy-value theory failed to consider historical causal relationships. That is, Atkinson analyzed expectancy and incentive simultaneously in present time to determine motivation but he neglected to acknowledge "the antecedent historical conditions or why an individual perceives the present situation as he or she does" (Weiner, 1986, p. 12). While Atkinson's ahistorical model simply depicted behavior as a

product of expectancy and value, Weiner's historical models took into account the individuals' personal history to determine how expectancy affected behavior directly, how expectancy affected value which in turn affected behavior, how value affected behavior directly, and how value affected expectancy which in turn affected behavior.

Weiner (2010) compensated for the weaknesses in Atkinson's expectancy-value theory by developing the attribution theory of intrapersonal motivation. Weiner asserted that motivation is initiated and regulated by the (a) person's emotions, (b) casual antecedents, (c) casual ascriptions, (d) casual dimensions, and (e) psychological and behavioral consequences. Collectively, these five components affect the intensity of the individuals' effort, how latent or active the individuals are, their degree of persistence, and what individuals will strive for in the future (Weiner, 1972, 2010). The attribution theory is based on the concept that people's motivation and future behavior are affected by their affective reaction to an experience and what they interpret as the attribution or the specific cause of the outcome. In the context of education, the attribution theory can be used to explain the differences in the students' academic achievements, motivation, and persistence (Weiner, 1972)

Outcomes Impact Emotions

Weiner's (2010) attribution theory explained how outcomes impacted people's emotions or affective reactions. Those who achieved success experienced a positive outcome dependent affect (i.e., happiness), whereas individuals who experienced failure suffered a negative outcome dependent affect (i.e., frustration, unhappiness). Typically, when individuals experience an unexpected negative outcome for something deemed important, they are driven to search for an explanation; in other words, they want to know what caused the outcome (Shapiro, Kazemi, & Weiner, 2013; Weiner, 2010).

Causal Antecedents

People begin by scrutinizing causal antecedents (Weiner, 2010). They review events that happened before the current outcome to determine if there are any causal rules that could explain the outcome. They may reflect on past history performance, personal performance in comparison to others, social norms, hedonic biases, and actor versus observer's perspectives (Graham & Barker, 1990; Weiner, 2010). For example, students who have a history of poor performance or chronically perform worse than their classmates are not surprised when they fail. Their causal antecedents predict their future failures. On the other hand, students with a long history of good results are shocked when they perform poorly.

Social norms are also clues as to what may have caused the outcome. For example, in the U.S., teachers at all grade levels support their students by giving them feedback (Weiner 1972, 1980). Unknowingly, they may be sending their students unintended messages tied to social norms. Graham and Barker's (1990) attributional analysis of helping behavior explained the process that American students used to deduce the underlying attributions of their performance. It begins with teachers evaluating and having unspoken personal opinions about their students' abilities and aptitudes. When students are deemed low-ability and fail, teachers are more likely to be sympathetic and helpful. Weiner (1980) said it was because the teachers attributed these setbacks to uncontrollable causes. Teachers praise low-ability students for completing easy tasks, offer them unsolicited help, or excuse them for poor performance (Weiner, 1972, 2010). However, when the teachers perceive students as high ability and when their failure is due to a lack of effort, then teachers react negatively towards these high ability students or simply ignore them (Graham, & Barker, 1990; Weiner, 1972, 1980). From a young age, American students learn this unwritten social norm and are able to infer what teachers confidentially think about

them based on observing the teachers' behavior towards them (Graham & Barker, 1990). What students perceive as the teachers' impression of them impacts their self-image, which in turn impacts their future performance, achievement, and level of persistence.

In a quantitative study involving American elementary school children ranging from 4-years-old to 12-years-old, Graham and Barker (1990) found that participants as young as 7-years-old perceived unsolicited help from a teacher as a sign of low ability. In addition, participants as young as 9-years-old indicated that when two students achieved equal results, the smarter student tended to exert less effort than the less intelligent student. For those reasons, participants inferred that students receiving unsolicited help from the teacher were probably the ones that lacked ability and had to exert more effort in order to achieve success. Furthermore, the participants predicted that the students helped by the teacher would be less likely to achieve success in the future. When given a choice of partners to work with, 33% of the 4-year-olds and 5-year-olds chose the non-helped students, 70% of the 8-year-olds and 9-year olds chose the non-helped students, and 100% of the 11-year-olds and 12-year-olds chose the non-helped students. Graham and Barker's study revealed that American students from a young age were in tune with social norms. These elementary school students interpreted the teachers' behavior to mean that those students receiving help and those students exerting much effort to accomplish the task had lower abilities compared to non-helped students who put little effort into accomplishing the task.

Another causal antecedent that may affect the individual's perception of what caused the outcome is a phenomenon prevalent in the Western culture called hedonic bias. Hedonic bias alleges that parents are inclined to take credit for their child's achievements, but will blame others such as the teachers, peers, or the child for failures and setbacks (Shapiro et al., 2013). In

the same manner, individual students with a hedonic bias tend to accept credit for their personal successes, but blame others or external circumstances for their failures and setbacks.

The actor versus observer perspective phenomenon is similar to the concept of hedonic bias. It refers to teachers (actors) taking credit for their students' improved performance but denying responsibility for the students' setbacks and failures (Weiner, 1972). In contrast, observers (e.g., parents) are inclined to hold teachers responsible for the students' decline but are less likely to give teachers credit for the students' improvement. In a like manner, students (actors) are apt to blame external factors for their own personal negative outcomes, but are inclined, as observers, to blame other people's traits for their setbacks and failures (Weiner, 1972).

Causal Ascriptions

Another component that could explain the individual's success or failure is causal ascription. It is based on Heider's (1958) notion of "can" and "try" (as cited in Weiner, 1972). "Can" refers to one's intelligence, ability, or aptitude and "try" refers to effort. Weiner (1972) explained that in the context of achievement, individuals attribute success to high ability or much effort, and failure to low ability or a lack of effort. The difference in people's perception of causality determines whether they belong to a group of individuals high in achievement motivation or low in achievement motivation. People with high achievement motivation believe that success comes to those who have high abilities or exert much effort to succeed. Conversely, they believe that failure is attributed to a lack of effort. They are more likely to initiate new tasks, take on more complicated tasks, persist at the task, and take responsibility for their outcomes. People low in achievement motivation perceive failure as an indication of a lack of ability. They do not correlate outcome with effort. They believe that once people fail, they will

probably fail again since failure is caused by one's abilities and intelligence. This is related to the concept of learned helplessness, which I will cover later.

Causal Dimensions

The third component is causal dimension. Weiner (1986) asserted that the causes of success and failure in achievement related activities or social encounters could be organized into three causal dimensions: locus of causality, stability, and controllability. Although, he went into depth about these three causal dimensions, he refuted the presumption that they alone could determine achievement motivation (Weiner, 2010). Weiner reiterated his theory that the causal dimensions are only one component affecting causal beliefs, the other two being causal antecedents and causal ascriptions.

Locus of causality. The first causal dimension, locus of causality, examines whether the cause is from within the individual or outside of the individual (Perry, Hechter, Menec, & Weinberg, 1993; Weiner, 1980). In other words, was the outcome influenced by the individual's own behavior and characteristics or not (Weiner, 1986)? Weiner's (2010) idea about the locus of causality branched out from Feather's (1969) empirical study of 167 students in South Australia. Feather reported that people's attribution (locus of causality) depended on their expectation for success at that particular task. Feather explained that there were two sources of causality: internal attribution, which included one's skill, aptitude, ability, and character; and external attribution, which attributed outcome to outside factors such as luck and other people. Weiner (1972) later added the attribute of effort to Feather's list of internal attributions. In reaction to Atkinson's theory, Weiner made it a point to explain how the locus of causality affected people's emotions. People who initially expected to succeed and did were inclined to attribute their success to internal attributions. They felt proud, satisfied, and confident about their success.

However when they expected to succeed but failed, they tended to blame it on external attributions and were inclined to feel surprised and upset. In contrast, those who initially did not expect to succeed and failed usually attributed their failure to the internal attribution of a lack of ability or aptitude (Weiner, 1972). They typically walked away from the experience feeling ashamed or humiliated. On a few occasions when they did succeed, they were grateful and attributed their success to the external attribution of luck.

Level of stability. The second causal dimension of stability also plays an integral role in determining people's future expectancy (Weiner, 1980; Weiner, 2010). When the cause is unstable, then individuals believe that results can fluctuate. Therefore, there is a possibility for a more favorable (or unfavorable) future outcome. However, when the cause is stable, then they believe that future outcome will most likely remain constant regardless if the locus of causality is internal or external. In the context of education, the dimension of stability is most concerning for students experiencing failure. For instance, when students attribute failure to a stable causality such as their ability (internal attribution) or to an instructor who is notorious for giving difficult exams (external attribution), then the students may feel hopeless about their future prospective since the cause is stable (Weiner, 1980; Weiner, 2010; Wilson, Damiani, & Shelton, 2002). Conversely, if students attribute the cause of failure to something unstable such as effort (internal attribution) or luck (external attribution), then there is the possibility for a more favorable future outcome.

Controllability. The third causal dimension is volitional controllability, that is, how much control individuals have over the cause of their outcomes (Shapiro et al., 2013). When differentiating locus of causality from controllability, Weiner (1986) pointed out the difference among internal causes within the individuals' control such as effort, laziness, and

industriousness, and internal causes outside the individuals' control such as aptitude, physical coordination, mood, and fatigue. Weiner struggled to explain the difference between external causes and uncontrollability since something external usually infers that it is uncontrollable. He used the example of a student who failed an exam because of a biased teacher. Although the cause was external and out of the student's control, it was still something the teacher had control over; therefore, the cause could be perceived as external and controllable. Another example that Weiner used was an unemployed person failing to get a job because of a prejudiced interviewer. Here, the cause of failure was external and out of the interviewee's control; however, it was something the interviewer had control over. Thus, it was still controllable. In contrast, if the unemployed person failed to gain employment because of an economic recession, then the cause could be perceived as external and uncontrollable.

With regards to how controllability affects emotions, Weiner (2010) explained that setbacks attributed to internal, controllable factors (e.g., effort) could result in people feeling responsible, guilty or regretful for the outcome; whereas setbacks due to internal, uncontrollable causes (e.g., aptitude, ability) could lead people to feel ashamed and humiliated.

Together, the three causal dimensions -- locus of causality, stability, and controllability are used to explain the causal attributions of luck, task difficulty, effort, and ability (Weiner, 2010; Wilson et al., 2002). For instance, Weiner (2010) stated that when people attributed their outcome to luck, they were saying that it was external, unstable, and uncontrollable; therefore, they could hold onto the possibility for a better future outcome. The assumption was that luck was not perceived as a permanent quality of the individual or a situation. It could be changed. People who attributed their outcome to task difficulty were implying that the cause was external, stable, and uncontrollable. The outcome was not likely to change in the future. If people

perceived that the cause of the outcome was due to effort, then they believed that it was internal, controllable, and unstable. Future outcomes would change with more or less effort. Lastly, Weiner stated that when people attributed their cause to ability, they were usually implying that the cause was internal, stable, and uncontrollable. For that reason, people who attributed the outcome to low ability tended to think that they would never succeed because they lacked the intelligence or the skills necessary to succeed (Graham & Barker, 1990).

Relevance of Learned Helplessness

One question that arouse from the attributional theory was why do some people believe that they have no internal control over their outcomes? Seligman and Maier's (1967) quantitative study suggested that if people learned that actively responding to a situation did not change the outcome, then they would come to believe that in all situations there was no contiguity between their personal behavior and the actual outcomes of the event. Seligman and Maier's conclusions were based on their shock experiments involving 24 mongrel dogs. In the first experiment, one group of dogs was able to escape shock by pressing a panel (escape group); however, another group of dogs were not able to escape shock despite pressing the panel (yoked group). After 30 trials, the yoked group did not bother to press the panel while they were being shocked since it had no effect on the outcome. In a second experiment, the two groups of dogs were given 10 chances to escape from a shuttle box. Each dog was given 10 seconds to jump over a barrier before a shock was presented in the shuttle box. If the dog failed to jump over the barrier, then the dog was shocked until it jumped over the barrier or endured the shock for 60 seconds, whichever came first. They found that all of the dogs in the escape group jumped the barrier to avoid shock. However, 6 of the 8 dogs in the yoked group failed to escape shock 9 out of 10 times. Even when dogs in the yoked group occasionally avoided shock in the shuttle box,

they did not link jumping the barrier to escaping shock in subsequent sessions. Instead the majority of the yoked dogs passively accepted the 60 seconds of shock. In a follow-up experiment, Seligman and Maier wanted to see what would happen to the escape group when they changed the rules of the game. This time the escape group was not able to avoid shock even though they pressed the panel. The researchers found that the escape group reacted more forcefully and determinedly than the yoked group and a naïve group of dogs with no prior experience. Seligman and Maier (1967) concluded that "if an animal first learns that its responding produces shock termination and then faces a situation in which reinforcement is independent of its responding, it is more persistent in its attempts to escape shock than is a naïve animal" (pp. 7-8).

Weiner (1972) referred to the phenomenon of not attempting to avoid negative consequences as learned helplessness or a low achievement syndrome. According to Wilson et al. (2002), learned helplessness was based on the three independent dimensions of causality: stability, internality, and globality. The dimensions of stability and internality aligned with Weiner's causal dimensions, but globality was something new. What Wilson et al. meant was that when people applied their experiences to global situations, not just to one specific situation, then they were more likely to feel helpless. Similar to the yoked dogs who applied what they had previously learned to the new shuttle box situation, people who attributed their prior setbacks and failures to a stable internal cause (e.g., ability) then applied them globally, failed to exert any effort to escape negative consequences in the future.

Psychological and Behavioral Consequences

The attribution theory alleged that causal antecedents, causal ascriptions, causal dimensions, and psychological consequences determined the intensity, latency, and persistency

of future behavior. Two examples given by Weiner (2010) involved the same initial outcome perceived differently by two individual students. The first student failed an exam and was upset. However, he was not surprised since he failed numerous times in the past (causal antecedents). He ascribed his failure to his lack of intelligence (causal ascription), an internal, stable, and controllable cause (causal dimension). As a result, the student felt ashamed, humiliated, and hopeless (psychological consequences). He knew that in the future things would not change. In the end, he decides to drop out of his math class (behavioral consequence).

Meanwhile, another student also failed the math exam and felt upset (Weiner, 2010). However, after thinking about it, she was not too worried since she has done well on most of the other exans (causal antecedents). She concluded that she was only in this predicament because she neglected to study diligently for the test. Although the teacher made her feel bad by commenting on how disappointed he was in her performance, she was hopeful (psychological consequence) and ascribed the cause of the outcome to an internal, unstable, and controllable (causal dimension) lack of effort (causal ascription). She planned to do better on the next exam by studying more (behavior consequence). In Weiner's (2010) simplified examples, he presented two students with the same initial outcome and emotion to illustrate how people's perspective of the causal antecedents, causal ascriptions, causal dimensions, and psychological consequences affected their future behavior.

Reattributional Intervention

Following the development of the attribution theory, several educators experimented with reattributional intervention. The goal of reattributional intervention, otherwise known as attributional retraining, was to train students to change their perception about the causality of poor performance (Wilson et al., 2002). More specifically, it was used to modify the student's

perception of casual attribution from one that was stable and uncontrollable to one that was unstable and controllable.

The reattributional intervention is an amalgamation of four theories: (a) Weiner's (1972) attribution theory which states that people who attribute their poor performance to an unstable cause can hope for a better future; (b) Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory which states that people with high self-efficacy in a particular domain will exert more effort on a task and therefore have a higher probability for success; (c) Seligman and Maier's (1967) learned helplessness theory which states that it is better for students to attribute poor performance to unstable specific causes than to stable global causes; and (d) Dweck's (1975) self-theory which states that people benefit from seeing intelligence as malleable (Wilson et al., 2002). Advocates for the reattributional intervention trained students to avoid the cycle of exacerbation where negative outcomes were linked to a stable, uncontrollable causal dimension that resulted in self-blame and a belief that things were not going to improve. Students trapped in this cycle tended to be more anxious which further reduced their chances of attaining their desired outcomes.

In one example, a group of incoming college students, pessimistic about their abilities and anxious about being in college, watched a video of a group of upperclassmen saying that it was typical for freshmen to struggle in their first year in college (Wilson, & Linville, 1982). They were also presented with statistics to support the upperclassmen's claims. The upperclassmen suggested that through effort and persistence, any unsuccessful freshmen could do better in their second and third year. As a result, more students in the intervention group persisted than those in the control group. Wilson and Linville (1982) reported that the dropout rate for the intervention group was reduced by 80%. While both groups of students improved their GPA in their second year, those in the intervention group earned a significantly higher GPA

than those in the control group. Reattributional intervention led to an improvement in expectancy for future success, increased student motivation, improved achievement performance, and reduced feelings of helplessness and anxiety (Perry et al., 1993; Wilson, & Linville, 1982).

Self-Theory

Dweck's (1975) self-theory is premised on the Weiner's (1972) attribution theory and Dweck's earlier work examining the effects of reattributional intervention on learned helplessness. According to Dweck, people who perform poorly and believe that the cause of failure is due to an internal, stable, uncontrollable force (e.g., ability) or to an external, stable, uncontrollable force (e.g., difficult teacher) tend to stop trying even though exerting more effort can facilitate future success. Like the yoked group of mongrel dogs in Seligman and Maier's (1967) experiment, these people presume that they are helpless in making a difference in their outcomes. Dweck asserted that one of the most important predictors of future behavior is the connection individuals form between past behaviors and outcomes.

In one of her studies, Dweck (1975) analyzed data from 12 participants between the ages of eight and 13 years old who were performing below grade level. Participants in the reattributional intervention group learned to realign poor performance with lack of effort instead of a lack of ability. Following the intervention, this group of participants worked harder and was better able to deal with setbacks than the other participants in the success only group. Those in the success only group were exposed only to situations where they could succeed. Interestingly enough, after the intervention, the success only participants showed a substantial decrease in their performance. Some success only participants became even more sensitive to failure.

Dweck's (1975) self-theory asserted that feedback that emphasizes effort or strategies motivates people, while feedback that highlights fixed abilities or traits demotivates them. Based

on repeated feedback received in the past, people come to believe that intelligence is either fixed or malleable. In turn, their belief about intelligence affects their future performance, the amount of effort they put into tasks, and how they deal with setbacks and failures.

Individuals who believe in fixed intelligence (fixed mindset) think that a certain amount of intelligence, personality, and character are permanent throughout one's lifetime (Dweck, 1975, 2006). In fact, they believe that a single test can measure their intelligence (Dweck, 2006). Therefore, in every situation, individuals with a fixed mindset feel the urgency to prove themselves. Moreover, since intelligence is invisible, it is only possible to discover how intelligent people are through observations. In other words, there is no room for error in performance. "The fixed mindset does not allow people the luxury of becoming. They have to already be" (Dweck, 2006, p. 25). Those with a fixed mindset believe that intelligent people will successfully perform tasks at any given time, but unintelligent people will never be successful because intelligence is not something that can be developed or changed (Dweck, 1975).

Dweck (2006) examined the benefits of having a fixed mindset. She claimed that children love being told how smart and skilled they are. They develop a sense of who they are and will be based on the labels given to them by significant others around them. The problem is that the recipients' euphoria lasts for only a moment until the next situation arises which requires them to prove themselves again. Individuals with a fixed mindset place a lot of pressure on themselves to succeed in order to maintain a label of success. Those praised for being special or superior to others because of their success run the risk of losing their title when they encounter setbacks or failures. If success means the individual is intelligent or skilled, then failure means the individual is unintelligent or unskilled. Dweck (2006) explained that individuals with a fixed mindset feel smart when they can complete something flawlessly, effortlessly, and fast. Hence,

it is only natural that they would avoid anything too risky, too challenging, requiring too much effort that could result in failure. A common motto is "nothing ventured, nothing lost" (Dweck, 2006, p. 9). It is not unusual for them to sacrifice learning opportunities in order to look smart, resist making errors in public, and avoid poor performance (Dweck, 1975).

Moreover, like the students in Graham and Barker's (1990) attributional analysis of helping behavior, individuals with the convoluted perception of working hard may tend to procrastinate, exert less effort, or act disinterested in the subject (Dweck, 1975). In order to preserve their self-dignity, they would rather attribute their failure to a lack of effort rather than to a lack of ability. Essentially, students with fixed mindsets are robbed of new and challenging opportunities to reach their potential since they are consumed with proving and validating themselves while doing unchallenging tasks (Dweck, 2006).

In contrast, individuals with a growth mindset believe that intelligence is malleable and developed throughout one's lifetime (Dweck, 1975). Although intelligence can be measured in one point in time, it does not define the individual's perpetual level of intelligence (Dweck, 2006). People with a growth mindset believe that individuals are born with "unique genetic endowments" (Dweck, 2006, p. 5) in terms of aptitude, temperaments, and abilities, but these endowments mark only the starting point for cultivation through effort and appropriate strategies. They are firm believers of taking risks, understanding, and mastering increasingly challenging tasks. They do not shy away from greater challenges and constructive criticisms since they are in a continuous process of bettering themselves. Dweck (2006) wondered if students with a growth mindset actually suffered from a grandiose view of their abilities and aptitude. Perhaps they believed that they were capable of doing more than they could handle. She found just the opposite; those with a growth mindset were grounded and could accurately describe their

strengths and weaknesses. They saw failures, weaknesses, and setbacks as cues of how much more they needed to step up their efforts in order to develop their intelligence and achieve a higher level of performance. Their common motto was "a person's true potential is unknown (and unknowable); that it's impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training" (Dweck, 2006, p. 7). As a result, students with a growth mindset tend to achieve better scores on exams, exert more effort, view mistakes as a part of learning, learn from challenges, and persist despite failures and setbacks (Dweck, 1975).

Dweck (2002) proposed that people's perception of intelligence can be altered with particular types of praises from their teachers and parents. Teachers and parents generally give praises to increase the students' confidence and motivation; however, Dweck said that not all praises are the same. She categorized praises into two groups. The first group, process praise, consists of effort praises and strategy praises. Process praise encourages a growth mindset. The emphasis is on how hard individuals work and how effective their strategies are (Dweck, 2006). Examples of effort praises include: "You did so well, you must have really studied hard for the exam;" or "I am excited to see how you're pushing yourself to better understand the concept." Similarly, strategy praises commend individuals for using an appropriate strategy to successfully complete the task; for example: "I like how you thoughtfully included this theory in your essay;" or "I like the way you chose to use this strategy to answer the question." Process praises endorse the idea that intelligence is not fixed; rather it is based on the amount of effort or thought individuals put into the task. It gives individuals the impression that others are there to encourage them to take on more difficult challenges so that they can develop even further.

The second group of praises comprises of trait and intelligence praises which imply that trait, intelligence and ability are fixed (Dweck, 2002, 2006). Parents and teachers who use

intelligence praises say things like "You're really good at this. I think you're so smart;" or "You got an A without studying? You're definitely gifted and talented." They also make comments about the individuals' traits in terms of their level of goodness, "You're such a good student/son/daughter," or give general approval like "I'm so proud of you." All of these praises are innocently uttered with the intention of encouraging individuals; however, in actuality the praises pressure them into maintaining an image of high ability, goodness, or intelligence by choosing future tasks that are easily achievable at the expense of actually learning something new and possibly failing. These individuals come to understand that others are there to judge them (Dweck, 2006). Dweck found that individuals who consistently received trait and intelligence praises were less persistent, more anxious about future failures, and perceived intelligence as fixed.

In essence, Dweck (2002) suggested that parents and teachers become cognizant about the type of praises they gave others since the words they uttered could influence the individuals' mindset. Equally important was to know that "we're all a mixture of fixed and growth mindset," and that our mindset was domain specific (Dweck, 2006, p. 47). Therefore, it was not unusual for people to believe that their intelligence in math was fixed and could not be changed; however their athletic abilities were malleable and could be improved with more practice and effort. In order to change from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset, Dweck (2006) recommended that individuals confront their assumptions about their intelligence, skills, and traits; know their triggers; be cognizant about having a fixed mindset; and act in ways that people with a growth mindset would act even though it may seem unnatural and uncomfortable at first.

In brief, Dweck's (1975) self-theory elaborated on the reasons why some individuals persisted while others gave up. The good news is that people's attitude about intelligence is unstable; that is, people can be retrained to think that intelligence is malleable and not fixed.

CHAPTER 5. METHODS

Study Sites and Participants

The study sites are part of the UHCC system. The public community colleges in Hawai‘i are similar to other public community colleges in the U.S. where students can choose from liberal arts and science credit courses, vocational and technical credit courses, non-credit courses, and developmental education courses (Office of the Vice President for Community Colleges, 2014).

All of the participants' names and any other personal identifying information were changed to protect their privacy and confidentiality. I interviewed 10 volunteer student participants who met the following criteria: (a) enrolled in at least one college-level credit course at the UHCC on O‘ahu, (b) were in their second year of study or more, and (c) met two or more persistence risk factors (i.e., delayed entry into college, GED or equivalent, financial independence, single parent, dependents other than a spouse, part-time enrollment status, full-time employment).

From the 10 participants I interviewed, I selected five for the final report based on who gave the most detailed and extensive responses. The five participants selected for the final report were community college students on O‘ahu. They were all female students who graduated from high school between 2002 and 2014. Four of them were born and raised in Hawai‘i and the fifth one emigrated from the Philippines. For additional demographic information, see Table 1.

Table 1.

Demographic Information of Participants

	Abigail	**Paula**	**Lori**	**Eleanor**	**Claire**
Gender	F	F	F	F	F
Age	20-23	20-23	24-29	30-39	24-29
Ethnicity	Filipino	Filipino	Native-Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese, Caucasian, Hispanic	Native-Hawaiian, Samoan, Chinese, Filipino, Caucasian	Native-Hawaiian, Japanese, Caucasian
Year graduated from high school	2014	2011	2005	2002	2005
Year (month) entered current community college	2015 (January)	2014 (August)	2014 (January)	2015 (January)	2010
Current enrollment status	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Part-time
Degree program	Liberal arts	Undecided	Science and natural science	Liberal arts	Liberal arts
Plans to transfer to 4-year institution	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
No. of children	0	0	2	3	2

I did an in-depth analysis for each of the five participants using Tinto's retention model and the five motivation theories and concepts. I did not include the conceptual model of Porchea et al. (2010) in the analysis because I was conducting a qualitative analysis and not a quantitative analysis. Using the conceptual model of Porchea et al. (2010) as a framework for analysis would have required me to gather data for all of the predictor variables in a quantitative study.

Recruitment

My dissertation committee members, friends, and family members introduced me to people who worked at various community colleges on O'ahu. As soon I was introduced to their contacts (i.e., counselors, administrators, faculty members), I sent their contacts an email message with an attached flyer (see Appendix A) and introduction letter (see Appendix B). The introduction letter briefly explained who I am, my purpose for the study, criteria for prospective participants, and information about an appreciation gift for participation. Three counselors and one instructor responded positively and helped me recruit students.

When prospective participants followed up and contacted me by email to express their interest in the study, I sent them a criteria list (see Appendix C) and explained that they would need to be able to answer "yes" to two or more of the questions based on the seven persistence risk factors (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Of the 18 community college students (14 females, 4 males) who initially contacted me, 11 of them qualified. All 11 students happened to be females. Subsequently, of the 11 students, 10 actually met with me at their respective community colleges. Nine of the 10 participants showed up for two interview sessions, whereas the tenth participant showed up for only one session. This participant was not included in the current study due to the lack of information to do a comprehensive analysis. Of the 10 participants I interviewed, three of them were non-native English speakers. One of the non-

native English-speaking participants I interviewed already earned a two-year college degree in her native country. She had difficulties understanding some of the interview questions and struggled to articulate her thoughts in English. I did not include her in the current study. The second non-native English speaker I interviewed had already been admitted into an engineering program at a four-year institution two years prior (2014) to our interview sessions. She was taking the majority of her classes at the four-year institution and finishing up one of her general education class at the community college because it was less expensive and closer to her place of residence. She was not included in the current study. There was also one participant who upon first glance met the criteria for the study; however, after interviewing her for over two hours, I realized that she did not meet two of seven persistence risk factors.

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), a perfect participant was someone who was cooperative, lively, consistent, honest, articulate, knowledgeable, concise, and coherent (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Unfortunately, the reality was that researchers rarely found perfect participants. For that reason, it was my duty as a researcher to be knowledgeable, guiding, open, sensitive, respectful, articulate, patient, discerning, analytical, and organized in order for the interviewing process to go smoothly.

Philosophical Assumptions

As a qualitative researcher, my ontological assumption was that I would hear a multitude of realities from different participants. Hence, I was not surprised to discover variations in the participants' experiences and perceptions. My epistemological assumption was that I could get a better account of the participants' experiences if I successfully built rapport with them and was familiar with their lived experiences (Creswell, 2007). The longer we talked, the more time we spent together, and the more comfortable the participants felt with me, the more willing they

were to share their personal experiences and thoughts. As for my axiological assumption, I believe that I needed to be aware of my own personal voice, values, and biases so that I could distinguish between the participants' perspectives and my perspectives (Creswell, 2007).

Case Study Approach

I used a case study approach, in other words, a qualitative empirical inquiry involving a single-bounded system to investigate and analyze a contemporary complex phenomenon in a real world context (Creswell, 2007; Merriam 1988, 2009; Yin, 2014). It was important to note that I used the term *phenomenon* to refer to "the concept being experienced by subjects in a study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 236). According to Merriam (1988), case studies were used when it was impractical or impossible to separate the phenomenon from the context of the situation. They were used in educational research as a way to describe, explore, and explain issues involved in teaching and learning; however, rather than focusing on the end product, the educational case studies paid attention to the longitudinal processes and meanings embedded within the phenomenon (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 2014). Case study researchers were interested in answering the "how" and "why" questions, such as "how people make sense of their lives, what they experience, how they interpret these experiences, how they structure their social worlds" (Merriam, 1988, p. 19).

The case study approach was applicable to my study because it enabled me to investigate how motivation played a part in the community college students' decision to persist in college. I did not manipulate any variables to see if it would make a difference; rather, I conducted in-depth interviews with the aim of hearing about the participants' lived experiences so that I could provide a thick, rich description of a complex interaction of variables within their real world

context to perhaps discover new relationships, factors, and meaning of a contemporary phenomenon (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Merriam, 1988, 2009; Yin, 2014).

One of the key requirements of a case study is that the phenomenon must exist within a bounded system; that is, researchers must identify a unit of analysis (Merriam, 2009). A bounded system did not refer to a single topic of investigation with an infinite amount of data; instead, it signified a finite amount of data as well as boundaries surrounding the unit of analysis. In my study, the bounded system was the limited number of second year or more students in Spring 2016 who were enrolled in one of the UHCC campuses on O‘ahu and satisfied at least two of the seven persistence risk factors (i.e., delayed entry into college, GED or equivalent, financial independence, single parent, dependents other than a spouse, part-time enrollment status, full-time employment).

In the field of education, case study researchers had the advantage of being able to produce realistic pragmatic knowledge rather than just abstract knowledge, since their findings were based on contextualized evidence that were not from an isolated controlled experiment with artificially manipulate variables (Merriam, 1988, 2009). Case study researchers acknowledged that multiple variables affected the results of the study and that these variables were sometimes neither controllable nor identifiable (Merriam, 1988). Furthermore, because these variables were deeply embedded in the phenomenon, there would not be any simple clear-cut explanations for the contextualized phenomenon. Personally, I aimed to offer insights, which were rooted in transparent, detailed narrative descriptions open to the readers’ interpretation and evaluation.

Positivists pointed out that researchers who relied on a single case study ran the risk of sacrificing external validity since findings and discussions were limited to that one particular case study (Merriam, 2009). Postmodernists refuted this claim by saying that each context

specific single-case study was important, since an amalgamation of them could eventually point us towards a broader understanding of a particular context.

Another critique of the approach was that case study researchers generally relied on their own instincts and intuitions which were based on prior personal experiences, schemas, biases, values, and beliefs (Merriam, 2009). Indeed, it was I who subjectively determined which parts of the narrative to include in my findings, which cases to select for the multiple case study, and how much of the findings to reveal. Moreover, the parts of the transcripts I highlighted may not have been the same as what another would have researcher highlighted. Critics favoring quantitative studies were quick to criticize researchers' bias in qualitative studies. Yet, Yow (2005) refuted their claims by asserting that "all research is biased in its subjectivity, simply because the research begins, progresses, and ends with the researcher, who no matter how many controls she may put on it, will nonetheless be creating a document reflecting her own assumptions" (p. 7). Thus, quantitative studies were not devoid of researchers' bias since these studies, too, were at the mercy of researchers coming up with research questions, choosing variables to focus on, and interpreting the statistical results.

Gathering data through in-depth interviews required much time, money, and energy; therefore, I had no choice but to limit the number of cases (Merriam, 2009). I was unable to include a large number of subjects that quantitative researchers incorporate into their studies (Yow, 2005). Nevertheless, the outcome I produced was a thick, rich description of the phenomenon. Qualitative research studies could be criticized as being too specific, too long, and too wordy for many policymakers who prefer to receive a concise easy-to-read comprehensive statistical report that allow them to form quick on-the-spot opinions about macro-level issues

(Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). I would suggest that policymakers balance their perspective of an issue by taking the time to read a few qualitative research studies as well.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research constitutes the trustworthiness or accuracy of a study (Creswell, 2007). In qualitative studies, researchers achieved credibility and authenticity by addressing its construct validity, internal validity, and external validity (Yin, 2014). First, I triangulated my data to achieve construct validity by incorporating multiple sources of data -- interviews, observations, and existing documents retrieved from the UHCC and the University of Hawai'i Institutional Research and Analysis Office websites. Seidman (2013) also suggested that researchers meet with each participant multiple times in order to ensure that their findings and interpretations were not biased. I followed his advice and met with the participants twice in order to gather information to support my conclusions with an adequate amount of data, as well as to check for consistencies in the participants' stories.

Second, in order to address internal validity, Yin (2014) encouraged researchers to consider possible rival explanations. Therefore, I designed the research study to examine Tinto's retention models and five motivation theories and concepts to strengthen the internal validity of the study.

The third way to achieve validity was to address external validity (Yin, 2014). Rather than strive to achieve statistical generalization which was generally used to evaluate the external validity of quantitative studies, my goal was to achieve analytic generalization to evaluate the external validity of a qualitative case study. The goal of analytic generalization was to apply or expand a theory for the purpose of making inferences about the current case study. Yin (2014) stated it this way: "[A]nalytic generalization may be based on either (a) corroborating,

modifying, rejecting, or otherwise advancing theoretical concepts that you referenced in designing your case study or (b) new concepts that arouse upon the completion of your case study" (p. 41). It was also important to note that case studies are not random samples or purposeful sampling found in quantitative studies. Since case study researchers are not attempting to generalize findings to a larger population, it is more accurate to describe case studies as "single-case or multiple-case studies" (Yin, 2014, p. 42). In the discussion section of my multiple-case study, I aimed to achieve analytic generalization by advancing the theoretical proposition about the retention of community college students.

Reliability

Reliability was another tool used to evaluate the quality of the case study research; it referred to the dependability of responses (Yin, 2014). The goal of reliability was to minimize errors and biases in the study; therefore, the study needed to be replicable at different times by different researchers producing similar results (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2014). I strengthened the reliability of my multiple case study by writing a detailed description of the research design, documenting research procedures, audio recording and transcribing what the participants said, and conducting the study as if being monitored by others. The idea was to provide an audit trail so that others could examine my findings, interpretations, and conclusions as they related to the data (Creswell, 2007; Krathwohl & Smith, 2005).

That being said, Cole and Knowles (2001) concluded that continuing to incorporate concepts such as validity and reliability into qualitative studies represented the researchers' inability to let go of the positivists' construction of good research. My intent was not to draw generalizable conclusions or a universal truth about a whole population of college students but to consciously connect with a small number of participants who could shed light about meaningful,

cultural-specific, holistic, authentic, personal experiences (Cole & Knowles, 2001). My intent was based on the idea that there was no meta-narrative that could be generalized to all (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Case study researchers make theoretical and practical contributions to their area of study by advancing knowledge that is based on heterogeneous, multidimensional, complex, personal lived experiences within a localized context (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Readers gain a better understanding of the general society when they gain in-depth insights into the particular experiences of individuals who make up these collective societies (Cole & Knowles, 2001).

Oral Interviews and Life History Research

Whereas case study was the approach (strategy) I used to examine the influence of motivation on the retention of community college students, oral interviewing was the primary method that I used to accomplish this goal (Creswell, 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). I chose oral interviewing as my primary method of data collection because I was interested in hearing from the participants themselves. My aim was to "peep behind the mask" (Yow, 2005, p. 20). I could best accomplish this goal by using a method that gave me the flexibility to formulate follow-up questions during the interview process when participants revealed something significant. Thus, oral interviewing was the most effective method to gather in-depth, unadulterated, raw data specifically about the participants' experiences, feelings, and perspectives from the actual source of study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yow, 2005).

Seidman (2013) stated that through the telling of stories, participants reconstructed some of their unique contextualized lived experiences. Personal meaning of the experiences were formed the moment they selected what experiences to share, what details to include, their

thoughts about the experience, meanings of their behavior, and the outcomes. By having participants contextualize the stories, I could catch a glimpse of their "irreducible, consistent self" (Yow, 2005, p. 222).

Whereas life history research uses oral interviewing as a means to gather data, conducting an oral interview does not automatically result in a life history. Life history and oral interviews are not synonyms. Merriam (2009) listed life history as a type of case study. According to Cole and Knowles (2001), life history is one kind of research that involves the "studies of people's lives" (p. 15). It is also important to note that life history is not the same as grounded theory (Yow, 2005). Whereas grounded theory requires researchers to enter the study without preconceived ideas, hypotheses or formulated structured questions, life history researchers are permitted to enter with predetermined issues and problems, hypotheses, and a set of questions based on prior research studies. At the same time, life history researchers are expected to abandon or challenge previous theories and ideas when evidence shows otherwise.

The word "history" in the term "life history" signifies the importance of understanding the participants' experiences within a larger context of their lives (Cole and Knowles, 2001; Seidman, 2013). It is the larger context of the participants' relationship with others, as well as their community, cultural, historical, and social context that put their lived experiences into perspective (Cole & Knowles, 2001). One way I learned about the individuals' life history was to ask them questions not directly related to education; for example, I asked them about their childhood experiences, family, values, and health.

What is interesting about life history research is the move away from the traditional interviewer-interviewee interactions. Formerly, researchers were warned not to form an intimate relationship with the participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The interaction was to remain

professional, like a business relationship or doctor-patient relationship. The unspoken hierarchy prompted researchers to conduct themselves as the higher-ranking interlocutor since researchers held more knowledge about the topic, initiated and ended the interviews, determined which questions to ask, and interpreted the data. Moreover, traditional researchers resisted answering personal or opinion questions posed by the participants since a greater familiarity could taint the participants' answers.

By way of contrast, postmodernist life history researchers are guided by mutual agreement, sensitivity, and respect (Cole & Knowles, 2001). When participants voluntarily agree to be interviewed, they knowingly enter into a mutual agreement with the researchers to explore a shared area of interest. From the start, participants are informed about the interviewing process and given enough information about the general topic so that they can make an informed decision about whether they want to participate or not. If they choose to participate, they are notified of their rights, responsibilities, and expectations. While an inherent hierarchy still exists in the research process, postmodernist researchers attempt to minimize it so that participants feel more like partners rather than subjects of the investigation. One of the ways I accomplished this was to utilize a common local practice of "talk story" when interviewing the participants. "Talk story" is a term used in Hawai‘i, which can be best defined as chatting. It has a positive connation where there is no distinct hierarchy in the relationship among people; instead, it refers to people getting together to share experiences and stories in a casual way usually while eating food. Since food is essential in creating this mood, I was cognizant about bringing snacks and bottles of water to every interview. It may seem like I got a little too friendly with the participants but it is a cultural practice and a necessity when seeking to create an atmosphere where people can relax and share their experiences.

Together, the researchers and participants strive to create a relationship based on trust, respect, and intimacy (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Cole and Knowles (2001) suggested that researchers form a relationship with the participants and allow them to play a bigger role in setting the relational boundaries. It is also critical that the participants' "request for reciprocity" is accepted (Yow, 2005, p. 161). Building an authentic relationship where participants are able to ask questions and get answers from the researchers allow them to feel more secure and comfortable. I had no problems accepting their request for reciprocity. I openly shared with them my relevant experiences when they asked and when it was relevant to our discussion.

In consideration of the participants being asked to confront past lived experiences, it was important that I reflected on the potential impact that the interviewing process and the final product could have on the participants (Cole and Knowles, 2001). One way I showed respect for the participants was to allow them to take control of the interview. They had the authority to stop discussing topics that were too emotional, too private, or too complex to articulate within the time given (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Seidman, 2013). Collaborating with the participants was my way of extending sensitivity and respect to them as they graciously reconstructed their lived experiences for the sake of my study (Cole & Knowles, 2001).

Approach to the Interviewing Process

I used Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) seven stages of interview inquiry as a general guideline for my interviewing process. The stages are (a) thematizing, (b) designing, (c) interviewing, (d) transcribing, (e) analyzing, (f) verifying, and (g) reporting.

Thematizing

During the thematizing stage, I narrowed down my area of study from Porchea and associates' (2010) two general categories of predictors (i.e., institutional factors and student

factors) and numerous subfactors to the psychosocial factor of motivation. During this stage, I also conducted a literature review and reflected upon my philosophy, position, and limitations as it related to the current study (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2014).

Designing

The second stage, designing, involved creating a plan for the study, developing research questions, determining how the case would be bounded, and creating an interview guide. Cole and Knowles (2001), as well as Seidman (2013) opposed creating a set of predetermined questions (interview guide). They argued that in-depth interviewing should emphasize the participants' interests and concerns. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), and Yow (2005) disagreed with Cole and Knowles (2001), and Seidman (2013). They stated that researchers should have the flexibility to create a predetermined interview guide. Nevertheless, they also warned researchers about the importance of designing the plan so that it was fluid enough to incorporate unexpected interviewees' perspectives and directions. In my case studies, the semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix D) reminded me to ask specific pertinent questions. Since my goal was not to create a grounded theory, the interview guide worked well for my purpose of investigating how motivation affected retention. If I had given participants free reign of the interviews, then I would not have been able to achieve my research goal. Even though I had a semi-structured interview guide, the participants still digressed off topic and talked about things that concerned them most. In those instances, I deliberately steered them back on track to talk about issues related to the study. I noted that their need to talk about certain issues signaled important aspects of their lives that could impact their decision to persist. I realized that there needed to be a balance between what I set out to retrieve from the interview and what the participants wanted to talk about (Yow, 2005).

The interview questions were generated based on aspects of Tinto's retention model and the five motivation theories and concepts, as well as questions posed previously by researchers such as Atkinson (1957); Atkinson et al., (1960); Deci and Ryan (2000); Dweck (2002); Greene et al., (2008); Maslow (1970); Pintrich and DeGroot (1990); Pintrich et al., (1991); Tinto (1975); Weiner (1986, 2010); Wigfield and Eccles (2000); and Wilson et al., (2002).

Interviewing

The third stage was interviewing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). I met the students at the community colleges they were attending. Prior to starting the first interview, I asked the participants to read and sign the consent form (see Appendix E). I also took a few minutes to build rapport with the participants since they were generally apprehensive about participating, unsure about what was expected of them, and skittish about revealing personal information to me (Yow, 2005). It was important to set the tone for the interview from the very beginning (Cole and Knowles, 2001). I started by asking them introductory questions with the aim of having them recall nonthreatening information about their background and past experiences (Yow, 2005). Students told me about themselves -- where they were born, where they grew up, and where they went to high school. I wanted to hear about their past history so that I could have a more in-depth understanding about the participants' present situation, thoughts, and behavior. It gave me a better idea as to how the participants' current experiences fit into the larger context of their life history.

Whenever necessary, I asked probing questions or follow-up questions to gather more information about a particular experience (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yow, 2005). Moreover, I asked clarifying questions and specifying questions when I was confused or when something was not clearly explained (Yow, 2005). To determine if I

accurately understood the participants, I summarized what I thought they said. When the participants got caught up in telling a tangential story, I used structuring questions to refocus the participants back to the topic of discussion without appearing abrupt or rude (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Other notable types of questions I used were the reason-why questions, the what-if questions, and the comparison questions (Yow, 2005). For instance, I asked the participants why they chose to attend this particular community college. I also asked them what they would major in if they did not have to worry about income. To better understand why they chose a particular major, I also asked them to compare subjects they excelled at with subjects that were difficult.

For the most part, I did not have to ask challenging questions to confront the participants about the validity of their story but when their answers sounded too ideal, I asked similar questions later in the interview. This was the case when I asked one of the participants about developmental education classes. At first, she denied taking any developmental education classes but as the interview progressed, she revealed that she took at least one developmental math class. I wondered if she did not know what a developmental math class was or if she did not want to admit that she had to take remedial math since she had been previously enrolled in a four-year private university. In any case, the questions were designed to get a full unrehearsed inside story.

According to Yow (2005), there were question types that researchers should avoid, such as leading questions, questions loaded with emotional terms, confusing questions, questions with double meaning, questions using jargons, questions that required specificity about a fact that must be researched, and questions that put participants in a bad light no matter how they answered it. My problem was simplifying questions for one of the non-native English speakers.

When I simplified the questions or gave examples to help her understand the question, I wondered if I was inadvertently leading her to answer the question in a certain way.

Cole and Knowles (2001) were vague about the number of times to interview a participant and the length of each interview, but Seidman (2013) suggested meeting with the participants three times, approximately one week apart for no more than 90 minutes per meeting. I was not so fortunate to meet with the participants three times. Since the interviews took place in the middle of the semester, the participants were busy with school, work, and family; hence, I could only meet with them twice. All but one participant showed up for the two interviews. The one participant who did not show up for the second interview may have been indirectly telling me that she did not want to meet again. The majority of the interviews were scheduled approximately one week apart but several interviewees wanted to get them done within a week. The interviews lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to 145 minutes per session.

During the interviews, besides creating an audio recording, I also jotted down a few notes on my semi-structured interview guide. The participants were informed that they had the right to stop the interviews at any time they felt uncomfortable or did not want to proceed. By the second interview, I seem to have earned more of the participants' trust. I found that they were more comfortable answering the questions and exploring various topics with me (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Yow, 2005). Since the interviewing process was not a linear process, I anticipated that some participants would pull back in the second interview because they may have felt like they revealed too much personal information in the first interview (Seidman, 2013). This occurred with only one of the participants.

At the end of each interview I thanked the participants, asked them if they had any questions or comments, asked them about the interviewing experience, and gave them a gift card

as a token of my appreciation. After the first interview, I arranged a date and time to meet for the second interview. I also had them fill out their demographic information (see Appendix F).

I audio-recorded the twenty interview sessions using a portable digital recorder attached to a Snowball microphone, my IPhone 6, and my MacBook Pro. Since I knew I could not redo any of the interviews, I had three recording devices during each interview. I anticipated that one of them might fail. During my second interview with Abigail, it happened; GarageBand on my MacBook Pro crashed, erasing not only the interview being recorded but also other interviews that had been previously recorded. Once that happened I switched from GarageBand to the MS Word audio recording feature. The other problem was that my IPhone 6 stopped recording whenever people called or when an alarm went off. The most reliable source of recording was the low-tech portable digital recorder. The only problem with the portable digital recorder was that it was not compatible with my MacBook Pro so I had to use an old Dell laptop to temporarily store the audio recordings as a backup.

Transcribing

The fourth stage of interview inquiry involved transcribing the spoken word into a written document (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). When I was ready to transcribe, I downloaded the IPhone6 recordings onto ITunes on my MacBook Pro. As for parts of the interview sessions missing on my IPhone6, I used the backup recordings on my Dell laptop. All transcription was done on Microsoft Word using Express Scribe and DragonSpeak. Since I was not doing a linguistic analysis, I took the liberty to leave out most of the fillers such as "uhm," "right," "hmm." I also eliminated words such as "right" and "oh," which functioned as feedback to the participants that I was following their stories. Moreover, I indicated on my transcripts the times when I could not hear what was being said on the recordings because of loud background noise.

Each participant's transcripts were organized and stored as separate files on my MacBook Pro. I also periodically made a backup copy on a portable hard drive and flash drive. In order to keep the identity of the student participants concealed, I plan to destroy information that links specific participants to the study once the dissertation process is complete. The only exception is the participants' consent forms. I will keep these forms in case there are future questions about the validity of the study.

Analyzing

The fifth stage of the interview inquiry as proposed by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) was analyzing the data. Charmaz (2014) warned that the goal was not to just summarize the data, but to actually analyze the data. One of the objectives of data analysis was to systematically take the vast amount of raw data and transform it so that the audience could get a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Another main objective was to see familiar events and acts with fresh eyes in order to identify previously undetected patterns and links which could possibly lead to significant insights (Charmaz, 2014). I expected to accomplish these objectives by organizing and reflecting upon the data that represented the details and complexities of the participants' lives.

Prior to coding the data, I gathered everything pertinent to each participant -- their consent form, interview transcripts, field notes, and demographics to create an organized database (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Merriam, 1988, 2009). Next, I imported the transcripts onto NVivo for Mac 11.4.1. It allowed me to code, organize, and analyze my data.

First cycle of coding. The first run through the transcripts is what Saldaña (2013) referred as the first cycle of coding. Coding was more than just a label but a plausible link between evidence and theoretical propositions. What data I coded was determined by my

research questions, subjective preference, conceptual understanding of the method and subject, and the interviewees' answers. At this point, I did not screen out any possible data that could possibly be linked to the theories and conceptual models so that I could look at all possible interpretations of the data. Furthermore, I used in vivo coding by quoting the participants verbatim as a way to preserve their voice, and to better understand their perspective until I was ready to further analyze the data (Charmaz, 2014; Saldaña, 2013).

I created a framework for my data analysis using provisional coding. Saldaña (2013) describe provisional coding as "codes based on what preparatory investigation suggests might appear in the data" (p. 266). Provisional coding makes use of theoretical propositions based on literature reviews, research questions, prior findings, and hypotheses (Saldaña, 2013; Yin, 2014). In the current study, provisional coding was derived from aspects of a prior retention model, and five motivation theories and concepts (see Appendix G). Provisional coding was assigned to nodes. NVivo uses nodes to categorize information based on themes or topics. For example, under the expectancy-value theory, I set up eight nodes in NVivo: attainment value, cost value, expectancy, incentive, intrinsic value, motive-achieve success, motive-avoid failure, and utility value. When the data pertaining to one theory or conceptual model was also evidence for another, I utilized simultaneous coding. This was the case for aspects related to social engagement in Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, the need for love and belonging in Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, and relatedness in the self-determination theory.

Charmaz (2014) and Saldaña (2013) differed in their beliefs about relying on prior theories for codes. On one hand, Charmaz (2014), who conducted grounded theory analysis, warned that relying on codes from prior theories could be detrimental since the main function of the analysis was for researchers to inductively come up with their own codes based on the data.

Researchers should not be limited to locate data in the transcript that fit theoretical codes conjured up by previous researchers. On the other hand, Saldaña (2013) stated that it was perfectly fine for researchers to use provisional coding. I took the liberty to follow Saldaña's advice. Once the nodes were set up, I read the interviewee's first transcripts and later I read through their second (and third) transcript(s) line-by-line to locate information relevant to the nodes. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) warned about biased interpretations when researchers picked and chose data to analyze from a particular theoretical lens. I tried to make every effort to counteract biases by reflecting on my own assumptions about the research, knowing the subject matter well enough to question their interpretations, developing alternative plausible explanations, and being sensitive to the nuances of the interviews based on my observation notes.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) also suggested using theoretical reading as a way to analyze interviews. They described it as an "informed reading of interviews" by consciously drawing from different theories when analyzing the data not with the goal of validating a particular theory but to understand the subjects' perspectives in their social context (p. 235). This was possible since I used multiple motivation theories and concepts as the framework for analysis.

When it came time to code for the expectancy-value theory and attribution theory, I used narrative coding to discern any patterns of structure in the participant's stories which revealed a central truth, a life theme, or an epiphany about life (Saldaña, 2013). Cole and Knowles (2001) stated that because people tended not to remember and share an experience in its entirety, the parts of the story they did remember and articulated were windows into the "elements of their identities" (p. 119). At times, participants told stories of something that began in the past which triggered another event or reaction with long-term consequences (Saldaña, 2013). When they did, I used process coding. One example was when Paula told me about a cousin who she was

close to in her childhood. They were best of friends. However, after a series of events, this favorite cousin ended up assaulting Paula. I realized that what she revealed about her past provided me with insights about her current experiences. It was similar to causation coding or logic models as described by Yin (2014) where researchers looked for links between attributions, causes, and sequences. Yin said that participants tended to give verbal clues by using words such as *because, so, therefore, since, if it was not for, as a result of, the reason why,* and *that is why*. In addition to causation coding, I also used emotion coding when the participants recalled personal experiences that evoked a strong emotion. Emotion coding was especially important when determining which events were positive or negative outcomes for the attribution theory. Lastly, I relied on value coding to highlight the participants' values, attitudes, and beliefs when categorizing data relevant to incentives and values under the expectancy-value theory.

Second cycle of coding. While the first cycle of coding centered on labeling and organizing the data, the second cycle of coding was used to mold and shape the data into meaningful information (Charmaz, 2014; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Saldaña, 2013). Once the transcripts were categorized according to the participants' nodes, I read through the nodes and took notes to better organize the data under each aspect of the theory or model. My goal was to eventually write memos.

Since I was interested in building on theories from prior research studies, I used elaborative coding during the second cycle of coding. It is a top down deductive method of coding which bases the codes on prior theoretical statements. My objective here was to compare my findings with the theoretical propositions in order to "support, strengthen, modify or disconfirm findings from previous research" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 229). Elaborative coding is similar to Yin's (2003) description of pattern matching for the purpose of explanation building.

Researchers engaged in pattern matching begin by describing two or more rival theoretical propositions. Then they look at their data to determine which pattern matches best. With regards to my multiple case study, I started with Tinto's retention model and five motivation theoretical propositions and then examined the participants' transcripts line-by-line in order to determine with pattern best matched the data. My goal was not to pit one model or theory against another, but to use them in collaboration to get a more comprehensive depiction of the role of motivation in retention.

At the end of the second cycle of coding, I produced memos for each participant that were separated by models and theories, and categorized by nodes. Memo writing allowed me to organize my thoughts, explore my hunches, give birth to epiphanies, confront my preconceptions and assumptions, find links between the data and theories, identify problems in the analysis, and create categories and themes that encapsulated the data and codes (Charmaz, 2014; Saldaña, 2013). These memos were the heart of my analysis when writing the first draft of each participant's findings.

Saldaña (2013) stated that it was common to use an array of eclectic codes. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) referred to it as bricolage -- when researchers used a mixed theoretical or mixed analytic technique to generate coherent meaning from the data. Berry (2006) said that the term bricolage came from a French word referring to someone using pieces of material from a variety of sources to create an entirely unique and separate product. The most obvious example was a quilter using pieces of fabric she cut out from old clothes to create a quilt. In the age of postmodernism and in a global world, this eclectic way to construct new knowledge is becoming increasingly useful as researchers continue to engage in the investigation of existing phenomena related to diversity, multiplicity, and social justice. Researchers today are questioning the

limitations of using just a monological process of research. With regards to my multiple case study, I have incorporated bricolage by using an array of theories, concepts, and codes.

Verifying

The sixth stage of the interview inquiry was geared to verify the validity and reliability of my research study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In a previous section, I explained how I have achieved validity and reliability for the current study.

Reporting

The last stage of the interview inquiry was reporting (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). I examined the individual nodes in my memos to see how the pieces fit together under each theory and model (Saldaña, 2013). At first, I did a within case study analysis for each participant, then I used codeweaving as a way to locate patterns and common meanings that cut across multiple cases (Merriam, 1988; Saldaña, 2013; Yow, 2005). One of the strengths of writing a life history multiple case study using bricolage was the ability to report contextualized vignettes related to different conceptual models and theories. These vignettes enabled the audience to peak into and vicariously experience the participants' private lives (Merriam, 2009).

Limitations

As the researcher, I acknowledged that I entered and exited at only one point in the students' entire lives and caught just a glimpse of the complexity of their experiences. It was important to remember that these students' experiences were influenced by a multitude of people in multiple contexts inside and outside of college. They had their own assemblage of family members, co-workers, friends, community members, classmates, and others who played a part in influencing their behaviors, attitudes, perceptions, and philosophies. Furthermore, each student was in the process of becoming and changing. The best that I could do as a qualitative

researcher was to meet them in the midst of their lives, and try to construct meaning with them about their past and current experiences.

One of the main critiques of case studies and oral interviewing was that it is impossible to take the researcher out of the process (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Yow, 2005). I am aware that I was the primary instrument in the interviewing method. Furthermore, I chose which topic to focus on, which interview questions to ask, which prior studies to read and reference, which method to use, which participants to interview, which areas of discussion to pursue, which data to highlight, which participants' experiences to describe, which codes to use, and which aspects to report (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Seidman, 2013; Yow, 2005). Although my aim was to closely communicate the participants' perspectives, the current study was a complex collaboration created from the participants' articulated lived experiences filtered through my perspective (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Seidman, 2013). I cannot deny the fact that my interpretation was probably influenced by my culture, gender, characteristics, ideologies, socioeconomic status, ethnicity/race, religion, political views, values, attitude, imagination, personality, moral beliefs, and the ability to rationalize (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Yow, 2005).

Second, while the strength of the study was the depth of understanding achieved for each case study, the study was limited to five cases of academically integrated female students from two community colleges on O'ahu; hence, the findings cannot be generalized. Nevertheless, the in-depth nature of my study provided valuable insights about the lives of community college students. Ideally, multiple meetings with participants would have provided an even better idea of what was happening in their lives. However, the reality was that the students were too busy to meet more than twice in a semester. Critics of the interviewing process may wonder what benefits do interviewees receive by participating in a case study? I think that some participants

enjoyed being a part of a process of increasing knowledge through research; however, most participants did not expect any benefits other than the small appreciation gift I gave to them after each interview. Yow (2005) reported that some participants have a positive experience when someone listens to their experiences and perspectives without judgment. This was actually true for some of the participants in the current study. Several of them said that the interviews helped them to make sense about what happened to them in the past and how it connected to their present day choices. One student said that she enjoyed talking about things that people did not generally talk about.

Third, since life history is a narrative reconstruction of lived experiences, it is not an exact replication of what happened, especially if it happened years ago (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Seidman, 2013; Yow, 2005). When participants recall an episodic memory, that is a one time unexpected event that took place in the past, they tend to verbally rehearse the story over and over again as they describe the experience to others. Each time they retell the story they are reanalyzing the experience and reinforcing meanings they have attached to it. Yow (2005) stated that with so many details presented at the time of the incident, the brain encoded only what it thought was significant. Significance was determined by factors such as the person's needs, past experiences, and knowledge at the time of occurrence.

One problem with memory is that it can be inaccurate (Yow, 2005). Within the first hour, the person forgets the specifics of the incident. After nine hours, the person forgets much of the incident, then after 24 hours, it is mostly forgotten. Most memories that last beyond the first day are forgotten within the next three to five years. However, memories, which remain after five years, may be remembered for the next 50 years or more. These lasting memories shape the profiles of our lives. There were several common long-lasting memories including the

ones that represented a significant turning point in the person's life and the ones that were emotionally intense. However, when a memory is too traumatic, it can be repressed as a survival mechanism. The participants' ability to accurately remember depends on their physical and mental health (e.g., depression), their mood at the time of the interview, their interest in the topic, the setting, the emotional aspect of recalling the memory, and their willingness to share the memory. When the question is about facts, then it is not necessary to correct the participants at the time of interview; instead, I would refer to existing documents to get the correct information.

In summary, I used a case study approach and oral interviewing as my primary method to conduct a qualitative empirical inquiry involving five community college students from two of the UHCC campuses on O'ahu. All five participants met the criteria I set up for a bounded system of analysis. I followed the interviewing process as suggested by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). This involved thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing using two cycles of coding, verifying, and reporting. The study successfully addressed issues of construct validity, internal validity, and external validity, as well as reliability.

CHAPTER 6. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Findings and Analysis for Abigail

Tinto's Conceptual Schema as a Basis for Analysis

According to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, Abigail's initial commitment to the goal of college completion at Star Community College (SCC) was influenced by her pre-entry attributes: family background, precollege schooling, and individual attributes. Once she became a SCC student, Abigail modified her commitment based on how well she integrated into the academic system and social system.

Family background. Abigail was born and raised in the Philippines. Her family immigrated to Hawai‘i in 2013. In the Philippines, Abigail's father was a farmer and a heavy equipment operator and her mother was a manager at an insurance company. Her parents owned their own business where they sold sand, gravel, and hollow blocks. When Abigail was in high school, her mother quit her job at the insurance company so that she could devote more time to managing the family's growing business. Notably, Abigail's parents made enough money from their business to employ farm workers who could tend to their crops on the family's parcel of land. Abigail's family did not seem to be wealthy but they were financially comfortable in the Philippines.

From childhood, Abigail was encouraged by her parents to become a doctor, lawyer or nurse. Abigail's mother had a four-year degree in elementary education which she used to her advantage to be continually involved in Abigail's schooling. Abigail did not mind. She described her mother as patient, supportive, and helpful.

Precollege schooling. Abigail graduated with an excellent high school GPA in the Philippines. In high school, Abigail especially liked her health pathway class but disliked her

computer programming class not so much because of the subjects but because of the relationship she had with the teachers. While the health pathway teacher inspired her to learn by making class fun, the computer science teacher discouraged her by unfairly allotting high grades to only the students he favored. After graduating from high school, Abigail was selected to be a recipient of the University Presidential Scholarship, which meant that her college tuition and fees for pre-med courses were paid for by the government. A big turning point in her life was when she immigrated to the U.S. since it meant that she had to drop out of the pre-med program and give up her scholarship. Abigail anticipated some setbacks in Hawai‘i since English was her second language; yet, she was surprised when she was told that she had to go back to high school because she was too young to enroll at a community college. In 2014, Abigail graduated from First High School (FHS) in Hawai‘i with a 3.9 GPA. This was the second time she graduated from high school.

Abigail explained how the education system worked in the Philippines. Students start elementary school at the age of six and remain there for six years. From age 12, students attend high school for four years. There are no junior high schools. For that reason, students are about 16 years old when they graduate from high school. Students who plan to continue on to higher education choose from a two-year college track, a four-year track, or a five-year track. Abigail's pre-med program was part of a four-year track. It would have then taken her an additional four years to complete medical school after her pre-med program.

Individual attributes. Abigail prided herself on always doing well in science. This was what pushed her to pursue a career in medicine in the first place. Moreover, she was a risk taker as evidenced by her willingness to leave her pre-med program behind in the Philippines in order to immigrate to the U.S. with her parents. Abigail was practical and mindful of the sacrifice her

parents were making so that she could attend college. After graduating from FHS, Abigail delayed college enrollment and worked full time for the rest of the year so that she and her parents could gain residency in the state of Hawai‘i, which in turn would qualify her for in-state tuition -- $2736 instead of $7584 without residency.

Initial commitment to college. Based on Abigail's favorable family background, precollege schooling, and individual attributes, it seems as though Abigail initially entered SCC committed to achieving her academic goals.

Academic integration. According to Tinto (1975), the student's academic integration and social integration at that particular college were more important in predicting student retention than the student's pre-entry attributes. In Abigail's case, maintaining a 4.0 GPA meant that she was well integrated into the academic system at SCC; there was no doubt that she could meet the college's standard of academic achievement. Like a majority of two-year college students, Abigail was first placed into developmental education classes; that is, English as a Second Language (ESL), English 21, English 22, and Math 82. She successfully completed her series of remedial English courses and remedial math by the time I interviewed her.

Social integration. According to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, Abigail's decision to persist also depended on her ability to integrate into the social system at SCC. Abigail was generally unsuccessful at forming relationships with others on campus. She complained that it was difficult to become a part of a clique in college because she was a newcomer to Hawai‘i. What made things worse was that she was a commuter student who spent minimal time on campus. In class, Abigail generally kept to herself. She did, however, become friends with one classmate, Jackie, whom she met when she first entered SCC in January 2015. They were in the same class for English 21 and English 22. From then on, Abigail and Jackie made it a point to

take the same classes together. The two developed a special bond -- talking about their problems, encouraging one another, and studying together. It seems like Jackie was key to Abigail's social integration on campus.

Abigail also failed to connect with most of the instructors and staff at SCC. She questioned whether the instructors even cared about the students since most of them did not bother learning the students' names. Abigail observed how they came just before class and left right after class. Because of their lack of rapport with the students, Abigail resisted communicating with them unless she had a pressing question that would affect the outcome of her grade. Fortunately, there was one instructor who was unlike the rest. Ms. Lawson, Abigail's speech instructor, made it a point to arrive to class early so that she could informally chat with the students. She quickly learned their names and praised the students individually. It was her way of creating a secure and comfortable environment so that the students could address the class material, their personal issues or any other concerns they may have had. Because of Ms. Lawson's efforts, Abigail was able to connect with at least one faculty member on campus. Ms. Lawson was Abigail's institutional agent. As for the other staff members on campus, Abigail described a counselor who gave her bad advice and coaxed her into taking classes that did not count towards her major.

Modified commitment to college. Despite having minimal social integration with peers, faculty, and staff on campus, Abigail continued to be committed to graduating from SCC with an associate's degree in liberal arts.

In conclusion, according to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, students who persisted were more likely to have congruency between their personal intellectual development and the intellectual climate of the school, as well as, an ability to form relationship with others on

campus. In Abigail's case, she had no problem meeting SCC's standards of academic achievement. In fact, her complaint was that some of the courses were not challenging enough.

As for her ability to form relationships with others on campus, it was questionable whether she had sufficient interactions as implied by Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema. However, based on Abigail's findings, I question what amount of interaction is considered bare minimum since in Abigail's case, just forming relationships with two people on campus seems to have been enough for her to persist in college.

Maslow's Hierarchy as a Basis for Analysis

According to Maslow (1970), individuals are motivated when they experience disequilibrium. In other words, when individuals lack something essential for their well-being, they are motivated to focus their attention on that particular need and exert effort to satisfy that need. Only when they are able to fulfill their lower needs (i.e., physiological need, need for safety, need for love and belonging) can they focus on fulfilling their higher needs for esteem and self-actualization. Nevertheless, whenever their lower needs return to a state of disequilibrium, they are motivated to divert their attention away from their higher needs and refocus their effort into satisfying the particular lower need. This cyclical pattern occurs because the needs are hierarchical where each lower need on the hierarchy must be at least partially met before individuals can think about meeting the next higher need.

Physiological needs and need for safety. At the base of Maslow's (1970) hierarchy are the individuals' physiological needs. Abigail did not seem to have any problems meeting her physiological needs. The second need on Maslow's hierarchy is the individual's need for safety. While Abigail was living in the Philippines, her need for safety was met. She explained how she lived on the same property with 26 cousins and felt secure since she was constantly surrounded

by family. Furthermore, Abigail's family was financially stable. Abigail did not share any traumatic events in her childhood that may have threatened her sense of security.

Abigail seems to have less security in Hawai'i than she did when she was in the Philippines. Living in a new country meant becoming acculturated to new customs, language, and way of life. For Abigail's family it also meant getting used to living in a neighborhood with numerous drug users, drug dealers, and gamblers. Abigail adjusted to her neighborhood by staying indoors most of the time.

Maslow's (1970) need for safety not only involves the individuals' physical safety but also financial security. Since the move, Abigail's family no longer experienced the same sense of financial security they had when they were in the Philippines. They were very concerned about the high cost of living in Hawai'i. Thus, Abigail's father worked three jobs and her mother worked two jobs to afford a family of four in Hawai'i. Abigail also pitched in by working part time as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA).

As a student at SCC, Abigail generally felt physically and emotionally safe. She could only recall one class which brought about a lack of security -- her family resource class. Abigail explained that this particular instructor would spend the entire class time ignoring the students while reading through his PowerPoint presentation notes. Moreover, he would not allocate any time for questions and discussions. Abigail was appalled that American instructors could get away with such ineffective teaching methods. Throughout the semester, Abigail worried about getting a C for the class since it could ruin her cumulative GPA and jeopardize her chances of transferring into a competitive nursing program.

Yet, it was not the neighborhood, high cost of living, or instructors that concerned Abigail the most; it was her mother's heart condition. In 2015, her mother had to undergo open-

heart surgery. Since then she has recovered from her surgery, but Abigail continues to worry about her mother's health.

Need for love and belonging. In the Philippines, Abigail's need for love and belonging seems to have been met by her large family network. In Hawai‘i, it was her parents who remained vigilant about meeting Abigail's need for love and belonging. No matter how tired Abigail's mother was after working two jobs, she made it a point to ask Abigail about school and reminded Abigail how proud she was of her. On the other hand, Abigail's father was never one to verbally praise his children; however, he admitted that he often bragged to his coworkers about Abigail becoming a nurse.

When Abigail moved to Hawai‘i, she bonded with a cousin Tammy, who was about her age. It just so happened that Tammy was also a nurse at a local hospital. This cousin played a vital role in fulfilling Abigail's need to belong. It was Tammy who drove Abigail around the island, showing her the location of notable places and giving her tips about living in Hawai‘i. More importantly, it was Tammy who taught Abigail how to navigate the American community college system. For example, Tammy taught Abigail how to fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application form so that Abigail could receive financial aid. When Abigail needed a part-time job after quitting her job at Jack in the Box, once again it was Tammy along with an aunt who were the ones to advise Abigail to get a CNA license so that she could earn money working part-time and at the same time get her foot in the door in healthcare.

By contrast, what bothered Abigail the most was the lack of support she received from some of her paternal relatives. Based on their discouraging remarks, it seems like these relatives did not want Abigail to succeed. For instance, when Abigail got a job at Jack in the Box, they insinuated that she should accept her position in life and "just stay there" (personal

communication, February 15, 2016). When she began college, they muttered, "She's not going to make it" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Abigail dubbed it as the "crab mentality" (personal communication, February 15, 2016), where these folks wanted to grab onto her legs and prevent her from getting out of the bucket. The underlying message was that if they could not succeed, then they did not want her to succeed either.

At SCC, Abigail's need for love and belonging seems to have been met by her friend Jackie. It was also met by her speech instructor, Ms. Lawson. It was not to say that Abigail's need for love and belonging was completely satisfied by these two people since she still longed to be part of a group of friends and wanted to get to know the other instructors just as well as she knew Ms. Lawson. Nevertheless, the relationships that Abigail developed seems to have been enough to address her need for love and belonging at SCC.

Need for esteem. According to Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, once Abigail's basic needs were at least partially met, she could turn her attention to the need for esteem. Abigail shared about a time when she was forced to stand up for herself at Jack in the Box. It was disconcerting, but in doing so she fulfilled her need for internal self-esteem. It all started when Abigail arranged to take an extended leave of absence so that she could spend a month with her cousins in England. Her original supervisor approved Abigail's request; however, when Abigail returned from her trip, this supervisor had been replaced. The new supervisor took Abigail back as an employee but refused to reinstate her to her former position as a shift manager. Not wanting to start from the bottom again, Abigail quit her job stating, "I'm not going to wait. I deserve better than this. So I went to school for CNA" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). By standing up for what she thought was right, Abigail was able to prove to herself that she was indeed strong, worthy, and capable.

Abigail longed to satisfy her internal self-esteem as a student at SCC. While she had already demonstrated her competency as a pre-med student in the Philippines, Abigail still had to prove to herself that she was equally capable of doing well at an American college. Abigail pushed herself to excel at SCC and was satisfied when she met the academic challenges of an American college by maintaining a GPA of 4.0.

Under the need for esteem, Maslow (1970) also mentioned the need to be positively recognized by others in society. In Abigail's case, her parents had high expectations for her from the time she was a child. Perhaps they realized just how intelligent she was when she was repeatedly asked to represent her school in the city and regional competitions.

> Since I was in elementary, cause we have this like every year, we have, or every quarter we have this, the whole region or the whole city all schools you have to choose students that are good at science and you have exams, and we have tests, and yeah, I would always go contest for math and sciences. (personal communication, February 22, 2016)

Abigail's family and friends often remarked about her intelligence. They encouraged her to keep up the good work. After all, having a family member in medicine brought about prestige and respect not only for the person but for her entire family as well. Abigail realized that there was a lot riding on her ability to graduate from college with a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Self-actualization. Since Abigail's physiological needs, need for safety, need for love and belonging, and need for esteem were at least partially met, she was able to pursue a career path that she was passionate about. Maslow (1970) said that self-actualization occurred when people were able to live life fully and when they were able to do what they love to do. It was questionable whether going into medicine was an inherent interest or something her parents convinced her to do. In any case, Maslow's hierarchy did not differentiate between the past

historical source of the interest. As long as the individual was doing what they defined as something they loved to do, then they supposedly met their need for self-actualization. For this reason, Abigail seems to be on her way to achieving self-actualization.

In brief, Maslow's (1970) hierarchy helped to explain what motivated Abigail to persist in college. Maslow asserted that motivation occurs when people perceive a lack of something that is necessary for their well-being. In Abigail's case, she may have been motivated to pursue a nursing degree in particular because her need for safety was shattered when her mother had to suddenly undergo open-heart surgery. Abigail felt fearful and anxious about relying on others to make her mother well again. If she were a nurse, then she would have had a better idea of what to do for her mother. It was important to note that when her mother was in the hospital, Abigail skipped class to be with her. This was uncharacteristic of someone who put such high priority on college. Abigail said she could not concentrate on her studies at that time. She demonstrated that when a lower need was not being met, then she naturally put aside her higher needs in order to address her more pressing basic need. Another reason why Abigail was motivated to earn a college degree was because she wanted to please her parents and fulfill their wishes of having at least one of their children go into medicine. In other words, by satisfying her need for esteem she could also satisfy her need for love and belonging. Not to mention, it would prove to her father's doubting relatives that they were wrong about her.

Self-Determination Theory as a Basis for Analysis

While Maslow's (1970) hierarchy focused on motivation as result of striving to satisfy a lacking physiological or psychological need required for survival and well-being, the self-determination theory zeroed in on motivation as a result of people's natural inclination to satisfy three innate psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

More specific to this qualitative study, the self- determination theory asserted that students would be motivated to persist in college if their three innate psychological needs could be met at that particular college.

Competence. When Abigail was part of the pre-med program in the Philippines, she had to spend long hours at school, but at least she was being optimally challenged. In contrast, Abigail said that the classes she took at SCC were not very challenging.

> Maybe, maybe because system, school system over there is harder and you're challenged. Over here, I don't know, it's like when I come to school, I'm not very challenged. Over there, there's first honors, second honors and stuff like that . . . You know, but over here, it's like, just go to school, like whatever (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

What was challenging for Abigail at SCC was to master academic English. It seems as though the community college was just a stepping stone for Abigail to improve her academic English skills and to work on her prerequisites for nursing before transferring to a four-year university where she could take more advanced courses better suited to meet her need for optimal challenges. Meanwhile as a student at SCC, Abigail believed that she had a high possibility for success. It was evident by her grades that she was competently able to grasp new information and perform at the college level. She was thrilled when she received positive feedback about her performance, which in turn motivated her to learn and increase her level of competency. Abigail was pleased whenever an instructor told her that her assignment was "well done" or that something she wrote was "very well said" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). The greatest complement she received was when one of her instructors used her paper as a sample for the class.

Autonomy. It was unclear whether Abigail would have selected medicine on her own had it not been for her parents pushing her to go into that field. Yet, there was no doubt that she was happy to be in healthcare. She was so excited when she was on the pathway to becoming a doctor as a pre-med student in the Philippines. Since her move to Hawai‘i, she has decided to settle for nursing. When I questioned why she moved to the U.S. when she was already in a pre-med program in the Philippines, she replied that most Filipinos would have done the same thing.

As a student at SCC, Abigail self-regulated the amount of time she spent on homework. On average, she said that she spent about four or five hours a day working on her assignments. She was able to do so by limiting her work to 15-20 hours a week. Moreover, she intentionally selected the best place to study. She said that she liked studying at Starbucks because they had fast Internet connection and air conditioning. Although the neighborhood public library would have been a logical option, she deliberately avoided it because of the number of homeless people sleeping there. When Abigail studied at home, she woke up at 2:00 in the morning and studied while the house was still quiet and when her mind was fresh from a good night sleep.

Relatedness. As I mentioned before, Abigail was minimally successful in developing secure and close connections with others on campus. She did not know many people at SCC and did not feel like she fit in. The worst was when she had to go to the campus library since many cliques gathered in front of it. They made her feel uncomfortable. Instead, Abigail liked to retreat to her own home whenever there was a long break between classes. This behavior further prevented Abigail from getting to know others on campus. Even when Abigail was in class, she typically did not to talk to any of her classmates except Jackie. Once again, Abigail missed the opportunity to develop informational networks and form new friendships. Although SCC tried to involve the students by having various on-campus activities, Abigail failed to see these social

events as opportunities to make new friends. Abigail's saving grace was that Jackie and Ms. Lawson had taken the time to connect with her. They satisfied her need for relatedness.

Integrated regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. Going to college seems to be an integrated regulation for Abigail. Although it was her parents who first valued education, Abigail eventually internalized it into her own set of values and beliefs. According to Deci et al. (1991), the degree to which people adopted an extrinsic contingency depended on whether they were operating in an autonomy-supportive or controlled environment. Abigail internalized the external contingency of going to college because of the autonomy-supportive environment provided by her parents. They provided her with a chance to grow through optimal challenges, such taking her to the math and science contest as a child and constantly praising her for doing well in academics. Abigail's parents were vigilant about providing for all of her basic needs so that she could solely focus on achieving her academic endeavors. Even when they moved to Hawai'i, Abigail did not have to worry about housing and food; she just needed to earn good grades in college. They wanted a better life for Abigail and believed that giving Abigail a chance to graduate from college was a gift that could not be taken away. As a result, Abigail also believed that going to college was a worthwhile endeavor.

Second, choosing to major in a medical related field also appeared to be an integrated regulation. It was a field she engaged in because she believed that it was worth her time. It was not clear whether her parents oppressed Abigail's inherent interests as a child by pushing her into medicine or law from an early age. If they did, then Abigail would have been operating under a controlled learning environment. Abigail claimed that she had a choice. After all, she explored her options and chose medicine over law. "And then when I was growing up, I started to like being in the hospital, so then I just went with it, and then I enjoy it. And they want me to be a

doctor" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Abigail said that she was particularly attracted to medicine because she empathized with those who were sick. She knew what it was like to bear the responsibility of caring for a family member with a health condition.

Typical of students with integrated regulation, Abigail performed well in college and displayed a conceptual understanding of subject matters. She perceived herself to be a competent college student who did especially well in science. She may not have had many friends but she knew that she belonged in college because of her level of competency. What may have also reinforced her feeling of belonging was her experience as a pre-med student in the Philippines. The pre-med program was a controlled learning environment where students had no choice as to what courses they took and when they had to take the courses. Furthermore, they were forced to take 28 or 29 credits a term. Despite the controlled learning environment, Abigail felt like she belonged in college because she was chosen as a University Presidential Scholar to purse this prestigious pathway, and she was part of an elite cohort. Thus, by the time she enrolled in SCC, she had already developed self-efficacy in college level academics.

Nevertheless, going to college was not purely an intrinsic interest where Abigail attended college just to learn new things because it brought about satisfaction and pleasure; she was going to college because it was instrumental in earning a degree, getting a good job, and ultimately living a comfortable life.

> Yeah, I think going to college is important, very crucial thing to do because when you go to college and finish college a lot of the employers will choose you over the other people who didn't go to college. And then in life, it's really good too because when you have kids, "oh you should go to college too because you know what, you don't want, you

wouldn't have this comfortable life if you didn't go to college, you know" (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Introjected regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. In comparison to having an integrated regulation about going to college and majoring in nursing, Abigail's motivation to get a CNA was an example of introjected regulation. Since Abigail expressed an interest in healthcare, I assumed that she had no reservations about becoming a CNA. I was surprised to hear that she resisted: "Actually, I wasn't intending to go CNA, but my cousin and my aunt were pushing me, 'oh, just go, go, go'" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). The only reason why Abigail considered becoming a CNA was because she chose to quit her job at Jack in the Box. She was no longer interested in working in the fast food industry earning minimal wage. In addition, becoming a CNA meant that she could get an early start in healthcare. Thus, Abigail moderately internalized the importance of getting a CNA as put forth by her cousin and aunt; still, she did not value it fully. Abigail struggled with the tension of internalizing the extrinsic regulation not inherently valuable to her.

> And then, school started again so . . . I never took my license yet because I was busy in school. And then, but while I was a NA [nurse aide], I was not certified yet; I was working for my aunt. It was a care home and then, after that, in December last year, I finally decided to take my certification, my license and I got it. And now I'm working as a certified nurse aid (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Abigail did not explain why she did not want to get her CNA but I speculated that she did not see it as worthy of her time since her actual goal was to become a nurse or doctor. After all, getting a CNA meant undergoing 100 hours of class time, then sitting for a licensure exam. It

was not an easy endeavor. Another reason could be that she did not like goals being imposed upon her by others without her input.

In conclusion, Abigail's decision to persist in college seems to be influenced by the fact that her need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness were met at least to some degree at SCC. Despite longing to be more connected to her peers and instructors on campus, there were no signs of Abigail wanting to drop out of college. While her motivation to complete her prerequisites for nursing at SCC was extrinsic, it was an integrated regulation, meaning that it was the closest that extrinsic motivation could resemble intrinsic motivation.

Expectancy-Value Theory as a Basis for Analysis

According to Atkinson (1957), outcome expectancy is the idea that in a particular situation certain acts would bring about specific consequences. It is a generalized belief that one thing leads to another. For example, in Abigail's case, she believed that being in a pre-med program in the Philippines meant that she was on her way to becoming a doctor. In another example, Abigail focused all of her effort on schoolwork expecting that a 4.0 GPA guaranteed her a place in the nursing program at Gilmore University (GU).

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) asserted that efficacy expectancy as described by Bandura (1977), held more weight than Atkinson's (1957) outcome expectancy. Efficacy expectancy is more than a generalized expectation; it is based on the individuals' belief that they themselves are able to perform in a way necessary to achieve an outcome desired in a specific situation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) .

When Abigail moved to the U.S., she realized that she was no longer on the pathway to becoming a doctor. Before she moved, she may or may not have had ideas about transferring into an equivalent pre-med program in Hawai‘i. If she did, she quickly learned that it was

implausible; furthermore, she subsequently had to face the reality of the high cost of medical school in the U.S. Although Abigail still believed that one day she could become a doctor, she set an intermediary goal of becoming a nurse since it required fewer years of schooling and less money. Abigail was forced to revise her outcome expectations of becoming a doctor not because of a lack of competency, but because of a lack of finances. While it cost only $4000 for four years to get a medical degree in the Philippines, it cost about $37,000 per year for medical school at GU. For that reason, Abigail efficacy expectancy was modified to becoming a registered nurse.

> [M]aybe I'm going to get my bachelor's in nursing, and I'm going to get my license and work in a hospital and save, and I might go back to the Philippines for the school of medicine because it's really cheap over there" (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

In saying what she did, Abigail may not have known that physicians schooled in a foreign country could have problems obtaining authorization to practice medicine in the U.S.

Abigail's efficacy expectancy also differed from her outcome expectancy when it came to getting into the nursing program at GU. Although Abigail maintained a 4.0 GPA, she was no longer 100% positive that she could get into the nursing program at GU because of the abundance of qualified applicants with perfect GPAs. Wigfield and Eccles (2002) pointed out that it was not just a matter of the individuals believing that they could perform an act successfully, but it also depended on how well they could compete with others in that domain. Abigail's cousin tried twice to get into the nursing program at GU, but she was rejected both times. Abigail said that the difference between her and her cousin was that Abigail had a higher

GPA and already had a foot in the door working as a CNA. At any rate, Abigail will apply to other nursing programs just in case she does not get into the nursing program at GU.

High self-efficacy. Despite the setbacks, Abigail continued to believe that she has the skills and cognitive ability to become a doctor if she is given the opportunity. Part of the reason why Abigail had such high self-efficacy in this area was because it was developed from a young age. That is, from childhood it was suggested that Abigail was exceptional as she successfully competed in the regional math and science competitions. Her high self-efficacy got even stronger as she achieved continual success in increasingly difficult science courses such as biology, chemistry and physics. After graduating from high school, Abigail was awarded the Presidential Scholarship. She further proved her academic prowess when she graduated with a 3.9 GPA from an American high school, and successfully completed over 30 credits at SCC while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. The semester I met her, she was still on the roll, taking a full load of classes -- biochemistry, microeconomics, speech and world history.

It was also characteristic of people with high self-efficacy to persevere in getting past obstacles in order to master a challenge and achieve a goal (Bandura, 1998). When faced with an imposed environment, Abigail figured ways to improve her possibility for a positive outcome. For instance, when Abigail was forced to go back to high school in Hawai‘i, she made every effort to earn good grades and graduate with a nearly perfect GPA. When she was told that she had to wait a year to qualify for in-state tuition, not only did she save money for college by working full-time, she also used the time to send money to her brother in the Philippines and to travel to England to visit her cousins. Abigail’s challenges did not end once she enrolled in classes at SCC. She was placed into two developmental English classes and one developmental math class which did not count towards her credits for graduation. Abigail used it as an

opportunity to brush up on her math skills and improve her academic writing skills, which in turn helped her to do well in her college credit classes. These setbacks did not stop Abigail from persisting.

Bandura (1998) claimed that people with high self-efficacy are able to keep their anxiety level low and manageable. In Abigail's case, she often experienced test anxiety. There were times just before the exam when Abigail's mind would go completely blank. She learned from prior experiences what worked best for her. She concentrated on calming herself down, reading the exam questions carefully, and answering one question at a time. One of the main reasons she was able to regain her composure was because she knew that she had taken the time to prepare extensively for the exams.

> If you believe in yourself and you get ready for it, then there's a high chance that you're going to get a high score and everything. You will do good because you know in yourself that you prepared for it (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Low self-efficacy. Interestingly enough, self-efficacy is domain specific. Therefore even though Abigail had high self-efficacy when it came to academics, she still had low self-efficacy when it came to making friends. Abigail felt like she was at a disadvantage because she did not have the same opportunity to form friendships in elementary school, middle school, and high school like others who were born and raised in Hawai‘i. Since this fact could not be changed, it caused Abigail emotional distress. She doubted her capacity to penetrate into any of the existing cliques at SCC and questioned what she could really do to change the situation. Moreover, Abigail felt like she could not join student council or perform with other musically inclined students on campus because she did not know them. In other words, activities that SCC assumed would encourage social interaction actually isolated students like Abigail who believed

that she needed to be socially integrated first before she could join in on the activities. In this domain, Abigail neglected to utilize her human agency and accepted her fate in an imposed environment.

Incentives and values. Based on Atkinson's (1957) definition of incentive, Abigail's incentive to become a doctor or nurse was high because the task was difficult and the probability of success was low. That is, Abigail was attracted to medicine because there was more satisfaction in achieving a formidable goal. Wigfield and Eccles (1992) disagreed with Atkinson's inverse relationship analysis and asserted that the relationship between expectancy and value was actually positive. In other words, Abigail gravitated toward medicine because she perceived the field of healthcare as important and she expected to succeed in earning her credentials to practice in the profession. While there may have been some truth that Abigail was drawn to the field of medicine because it was prestigious and exclusive, it was also likely that she was drawn to the field because she thought it was a worthwhile profession and she believed that she could succeed.

Cost value. The cost of immigrating to the U.S. at the time that she did meant that Abigail had to drop out of her pre-med program. It was a high price to pay. Abigail discussed this with some but not total regret: "I don't really consider it a failure, but I really wanted to be a doctor. . . And my friends in the Philippines are graduating and I'm still here, like I'm starting all over again" (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

In all likelihood, Abigail's high self-efficacy gave her the confidence to immigrate. She must have thought that she could do just as well academically in the U.S. She knew she would have to exert a little more effort to accomplish her goal since she had to now do it in a second language, but in her mind it was definitely possible. In addition, Abigail could not pass up the

opportunity to move to the U.S. with her parents. Thus even though the cost of immigrating was high, she knew that she had to take advantage of the opportunity.

> When you come here, you live the American dream. And we thought like, oh that's good. More opportunities . . . and higher pay and stuff like that. So my parents were waiting for this for 25 years and then, yeah, of course when they had the opportunity then they grabbed at it. Of course, who doesn't want to go United States, you know (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

When I asked Abigail about the opportunity cost of going to college, in other words, what she gave up to go to college, she looked at me in disbelief.

> I don't think there is nothing you give up for college. It's in my heart and in my mind and I don't think I'm giving up anything so if you want to have a very comfortable life in the future and you want to give your kids a good life, a comfortable life, then do whatever you have to do now, you know (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Attainment value. Abigail strived to get straight As in college as a way to outwardly display how competent she perceived herself to be. She knew that persisting in school would bring about fruitful results like it did in the past when she excelled in elementary school, in high school, and in college in the Philippines. Initially she may have had some doubts about her ability to perform well at SCC; nevertheless, her doubts faded when she proved to herself and to others that she could handle the work and earn high grades in an American college.

Intrinsic value. Abigail's desire to become a doctor was largely shaped by her parents who pushed her from an early age to go into medicine; yet, she claimed medicine to be her own interest. Abigail said that she was drawn into healthcare because she could encourage patients, help them get better, and see them get cured. Even as a CNA, Abigail felt like she was making a

difference as she administered medication to her patients and helped them with their daily living activities. She seems to have a philosophy of requital: "I think if I did good to other people then when I get sick, you know, you give good and you get good" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Abigail's interest to become a nurse or doctor may have intensified when her mother had to undergo open-heart surgery after they moved to Hawai'i. In the Philippines, the doctors did not detect her mother's heart condition which had existed from childhood. Abigail admitted that even if the heart condition had been detected, the doctors in the Philippines would not have corrected it unless the person was wealthy enough to pay for all of the testing and procedures necessary to treat the condition. "Yeah. You're just gonna die if you're poor or you don't have enough money. You're just gonna die there" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Becoming a nurse or doctor would enable Abigail to achieve upward social mobility so that her family members could afford to receive quality healthcare services. It would also allow her to build relationships with a network of doctors, nurses, and technicians who would go out of their way to help a fellow healthcare worker.

Utility value. Abigail engaged in uninteresting activities to achieve her long-term goal of earning a college degree and becoming a healthcare professional. For instance, at SCC, she put up with apathetic instructors so that she could earn As. She exerted 100% effort into all of her assignments despite not liking some of the subject matters. She persevered because earning good grades was a means to an end. "I'm always doing my best to get high grades. I'm trying to do 4.0 until I graduate here and I hope [to] transfer to the nursing program" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Abigail knew the alternative of not sacrificing today in order to attain a long-term goal tomorrow. "I don't want to be stuck working at a fast food

restaurant or something. I want to strive hard. I have a lot of dreams" (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Motive. The third factor in Atkinson's (1957) theory is motive. It is the drive that energizes the person to either strive to achieve success or to avoid failure. Given a choice, Abigail who strived to achieve success chose challenging activities just above her comfort zone. She did not choose anything too difficult or too easy. Perhaps that was one of the reasons why Abigail chose to go to a community college instead of a four-year university after graduating from FHS. It could possibly be the reason why she was willing to become a nurse before becoming a doctor. She could be taking on challenges just above her comfort zone to see what was expected of students interested in pursuing medicine in an American college. Furthermore, attending SCC enabled her to take her prerequisite courses at a small college campus close to home. It was a challenge just above her comfort zone.

In conclusion, Abigail was forced to change her outcome expectancies once she moved to Hawai‘i. That is, she had to face the fact that she was no longer on a direct pathway to becoming a medical doctor. It was also not guaranteed that she would get into the nursing program at GU. Despite her setbacks, Abigail continued to have high self-efficacy in academics. There was a positive relationship between her expectancy and values. She was drawn particularly to nursing because she believed that it was worthwhile and she knew that she could succeed in this field. She was outwardly able to prove her level of competency as she put forth 100% effort on all assignments with the understanding that her actions today would allow her to achieve her long-term goal of pursuing an interest that she had since childhood. Abigail admitted that there was nothing else she would rather do than attend college at this time in her life.

Attribution Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Weiner's (1986) attribution theory asserted that Abigail's motivation and her future achievement strivings would be affected by her affective reaction to the outcomes and what she interpreted as the causes of the outcomes. Based on my analysis there were two notable positive outcomes that made Abigail happy: achieving academic success and getting scholarships and grants to pay for college. There were also two negative outcomes that led to Abigail's frustration and unhappiness: writing at college level and not connecting with others at SCC.

When I met Abigail, she proudly revealed to me that she had a 4.0 GPA at SCC and was a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Yet, this was nothing out of the ordinary for Abigail. Looking at her past history, she had a proclivity for earning good grades both as a student in the Philippines and in Hawai‘i. In comparison to other students, Abigail did well in her classes, especially in science. She mentioned how she was the one who had to help her friend in biochemistry. When Abigail was a child, she had an edge over her classmates because her mother held a degree in education. That is to say, Abigail has always had her own personal tutor throughout all her years as a student.

> My mother was very involved because she graduated as a teacher. And when I was young . . . she would always like pinch me or something if I don't do homework and stuff like that. She's the first one who taught me how to read and count and stuff like that. Cause she's very patient because she was a teacher. She was an elementary teacher. And growing up, for example, in high school, like I have to practice this monologue, she would, she would watch me and tell me what's wrong and what things I should improve (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Aside from past history and comparison to others as causes for success, Weiner (1986) also mentioned a causal antecedent called hedonic bias. Abigail blamed her apathetic instructors for her setbacks but attributed her academic outcomes to her own abilities (uncontrollable, internal, stable attribute) and the amount of effort (controllable, internal, unstable attribute) she exerted. However, since effort was unstable and continuously required for ongoing success, Abigail was forced to be vigilant about every single assignment, project, and exam leaving her with no room to procrastinate or loosen up.

> No one's perfect. They, everyone has the capacity to do better than what they're doing right now. So, sometimes I slack too, I procrastinate. "Oh later." Sometimes, "Oh, it's one hour to do this." Sometimes I slack but most of the time I really don't, yeah (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Clearly, Abigail valued education and pushed herself so that she could achieve her academic goals.

> I'm an overachiever. For example, I have exams or something like that. And when I have free time, I study. I prepare a lot. For example, for my speech, for my assignments, projects or whatever, I prepare myself. I want to do good. . . If I don't get 100%, I would feel bad (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

The second notable positive outcome that made Abigail happy was getting scholarships and grants to pay for her college tuition in Hawai‘i. Most scholarships and grants took the student's grades into account. This was not a problem for Abigail since she had stellar grades. However, compared to the other immigrant students new to the U.S., Abigail was at an advantage since her cousin Tammy (external, unstable, uncontrollable attribute) was willing to walk her through the financial aid application process. According to Abigail, it took minimal

effort (internal, unstable, controllable attribute) to apply for FAFSA and scholarships. "It's very easy and it's very good because they pay you to go college" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). She thought it was easy because someone showed her what information to gather and how to fill out the forms. Other non-native English speakers needing financial aid were not as fortunate as Abigail.

The attribution theory was also useful in identifying unexpected negative outcomes that were important to the person (Weiner, 1986). One unexpected negative outcome that frustrated Abigail was her academic writing. It was unexpected because she had mastered communicating in English in daily informal conversations. How could academic writing be so different?

Abigail attributed her setback in writing to an external circumstance beyond her control; that is, it was not her fault that she had to suddenly move to the U.S. in the middle of her college years. Furthermore, she was at a disadvantage in comparison to the native English speakers who were equipped to write college papers. It was also beyond her control that the tutors at the writing center at SCC were of little help. In her 30-minute session, the tutors offered her nothing but general suggestions.

> Maybe, they could just see the paper for themselves and I don't know instead of us reading. Because if you're reading you're not looking at the spelling or the punctuations and stuff like that. Or the paragraphs or whatever, so I felt like, they're lacking. Cause if you really help someone, you would look at their papers and they would read it then you, cause, other person read the paper out loud already cause it's their paper, they wrote it already (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

When Abigail asked them to look at her paper because she needed help with syntax, lexicon, and mechanics, they refused. "They don't check, they don't really check the grammar

and stuff like that" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). As a non-native English speaker still learning academic English, the writing center was a major disappointment.

> [M]y grammar, cause English is my second language and sometimes I have a hard time stringing (inaudible) and stuff like that. Or you know my grammar, well it's not good, and stuff like that, and it doesn't even relate to this topic, our topic. For example, when I took my English 100, I was writing this paper, and some of my points or yeah, it says like, it's not related. I guess, so, I had to revise and everything (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

On the positive side, Abigail did not attribute her writing skills to an uncontrollable, internal, stable attribute of low ability; rather she expected to improve if she persisted and continued to put in the effort (controllable, internal, unstable attribute).

The second negative outcome which similarly led to Abigail's unhappiness was her difficulty in connecting with others at SCC. When Abigail explained the reason why she was unable to make many friends, she pointed to the other students who had formed close bonds because they went to school together. Abigail believed that she was at a total disadvantage as a newcomer, blaming the situation on an external, stable attribute over which she had no control. Unfortunately for her social life, she did not examine her own actions that blocked potential friendships. Then too, appalled at the indifference and lack of passion displayed by her SCC instructors, she blamed them for not connecting with the students. Believing that the situation was an external, stable attribute, she failed to consider ways to improve the situation, such as meeting with the instructors during their office hours to get to know them while discussing a particular subject matter.

In conclusion, based on Weiner's (1986) attribution theory that motivation is dependent upon the person's emotions, causal antecedents, casual ascriptions, causal dimensions, and psychological and behavioral consequences, it seems highly likely that Abigail would continue to actively exert effort in much the same way as she has done in the past to achieve academic success in college and to receive scholarships and grants. Furthermore, since Abigail attributed her writing skills to effort and not to ability, then it was most likely that she would persist in improving her skills by diligently employing as much effort as necessary to meet the college's academic standard. Lastly, since Abigail attributed her lack of social integration at SCC to an uncontrollable, external, unstable attribute, it was highly likely that she would not expend much effort developing new relationships at SCC. It was an unstable situation that would hopefully change when she transferred to a four-year university.

Self-Theory as a Basis for Analysis

In my attempt to learn whether or not Abigail thought that intelligence was either fixed or malleable, I asked her directly if she thought that a person's intelligence and ability could be significantly changed.

> It's really up to the person. If you work hard, if you really want to do something, you can do it. You just have to believe in yourself. You just have to go for it. You know, if you want to succeed, like, yeah, if you really want to pass this class then take other, like go, go to the library and ask other people's help. You don't understand something. You know, you just keep it to yourself. If you don't understand, if you really cannot then seek other people's help. If other people, some of the time, other people care too. And they can give them your time, I mean, they can give their time to help you and yeah, if you

really want to do something. If you really want to, I mean, get through something, you can do it if you really believe in yourself (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Her answer seems to reflect a growth mindset. Moreover, she confirmed her belief that effort rather than genetics determined a person's intelligence when she said: "If you're not intelligent, you're going to have a hard time grasping things, but even if you're intelligent, if you're not putting in effort, then still you're going to fail" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). Abigail also reflected a growth mindset when she eagerly told me that nurses have to undergo ongoing training courses throughout their careers to keep up to date with the latest advancements and newest medications. I concluded that Abigail believed that intelligence is malleable. She had a growth mindset.

To double check whether Abigail really had a growth mindset, I evaluated the connections that Abigail made between her past behaviors and outcomes. In the past, whenever Abigail worked hard and succeeded at something, she apparently was praised. She said that she loved being praised so much that it became her motivation to do well: "It's like addiction. Oh, I want to be praised again and stuff like that so I would always try harder and stuff to make them better and to receive praises" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). For that reason, Abigail found herself striving to earn 100% on all of her assignments, projects, and exams with the mindset that, "You do good, and you get reward. And if you don't do good, then you don't get reward so you would always want to strive harder, do everything that you do to get reward" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). What she revealed was a red flag that perhaps Abigail had a bit of a fixed mindset. Similar to other fixed mindset students, she also placed a lot of pressure on herself to complete the task flawlessly in order to maintain her label as a successful intelligent student. Thus, the possibility of getting a C in her Family Resource class at

SCC was devastating, for if getting As indicated that she was intelligent, then getting Cs meant that she was unintelligent. Unlike other fixed-minded students, Abigail did not avoid risky and challenging classes that required her to exert much effort. She wanted to learn, understand, and master new things that she could use in her future career even if it meant possibly failing in front of others.

According to Dweck (1975), people's mindsets are influenced by the kind of feedback they received in the past. Feedback that emphasizes effort or strategies motivates people but feedback that emphasizes abilities, intelligence, and traits demotivates them. Abigail received various types of praises from her father, siblings, extended family members, parents' friends, and SCC instructors. For example when Abigail told her mother that she had received a scholarship, her mother replied, "Oh, good job . . . keep it up . . . I'm so proud of you" (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Her mother's praise rewarded not only effort, but also the fact that Abigail was a good pleasing child. In another instance, Abigail told me about a time when her brother bragged to his co-workers about how intelligent Abigail was for getting a scholarship. It was similar to the way her father bragged to his co-workers about Abigail going into nursing. Even her aunt and mother's friends in the Philippines sent her private messages saying, "oh, good job, we're really proud of you, you did really good, keep it up" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). The feedback that Abigail received from significant people in her life reinforced her perception that she was doing well academically because of her abilities, intelligence, traits, and effort. At SCC, the instructors gave Abigail comments such as "that's good, bravo, excellent, you really did a good job, you did a great job," "well done" and "that's very well said" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). They primarily emphasized process. As a result, Abigail performed like someone with a fixed mindset but

intellectually knew that intelligence was malleable and something that was developed throughout one's lifetime.

Closing Comments

In order to hear directly from Abigail on why she thought students persisted or dropped out of college, I asked her two questions: why did she choose to persevere in college and why did students drop out of college. Abigail said that she persisted because she wants a better life for herself and her future family. She dreamt of living a comfortable life that was void of suffering. In a previous discussion, she mentioned that her goal was to be financially secure without having to rely on a husband. When Abigail thought about earning a college degree, she reflected on how proud she would be knowing that she did her best to improve her skillset.

To address the question why students dropped out of college, Abigail said that some students had family or work obligations that took priority, while others were unable to afford college when their GPA fell and they could no longer qualify for scholarships and financial aid. One of her more interesting answers was that some students dropped out because they had better opportunities as stock traders. She met teachers, doctors, and college dropouts who were making more money trading stocks than working a traditional job. As for Abigail, she did not plan to drop out of college since she valued earning a college degree and knew that a degree could change her trajectory in life.

Findings and Analysis for Paula

Tinto's Conceptual Schema as a Basis for Analysis

According to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, Paula's initial commitment to the goal of college completion at Pine Community College (PCC) was shaped by her family background,

precollege schooling and individual attributes. In turn, her academic and social integration at PCC shared her modified commitment to the goal of college completion.

Family background. Paula's parents were both from the Philippines, but did not know each other until they immigrated to Hawai'i. Her father was a much older man with a wife and four children back in the Philippines. Interestingly enough, Paula's father was physically around when Paula was growing up, but she did not know that he was her father until later in life. Her parents were never married.

> And then like I asked them one time when we were eating dinner like, "are you really my dad?" And he was like, "yeah." and I was like, "then why would you lie to me, why do you lie to me like why can't you just tell me you're my real dad?" And we were just quiet (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When Paula was only two years old, her mother moved Paula and her older half-sister away from the extended family on the neighbor island to O'ahu in order to take advantage of better job opportunities. While on O'ahu, Paula's father visited them once in a while, but never lived with them. Paula remembered relying mostly on her sister for her necessities until her sister decided to move back to the neighbor island when Paula was only in the third or fourth grade. Then, it was just Paula and her mother. If that were not difficult enough, Paula's mother, who worked as a caregiver, left Paula alone for days at a time, expecting Paula to take care of herself.

> I guess it was kind of like a live-in kind of thing but she [Paula's mother] didn't want to be driving back and forth all the time so then I would never see her. Sometimes it would be like once out of the week, she would come home, and then cook something and then

after that I wouldn't even see her for a couple of days because she had to work (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When Paula ran out of her mother's prepared meals, she would cook simple things such as "saimin [noodles], eggs, rice, and like if there was any leftovers for like frying" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). She never questioned whether her situation was normal; "that's what I was raised to do, my own laundry. I remember like taking the stuff down, and then I would start like cleaning the whole house" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). When Paula's maternal grandmother visited from California, she was appalled to see Paula's mother neglecting Paula. The grandmother suggested that Paula move to California to live with her and Paula's aunt. As a result, Paula spent part of her sixth and seventh grade years in California, but was eventually sent back to Hawai'i because her aunt would no longer care for Paula. The aunt explained: "[Y]ou know this is the time you need to be with your mom and like you're growing up, and you're turning into a teenager, you should like, your mom should be taking care of you" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Although it was logical reasoning, Paula still felt rejected.

Precollege schooling. Paula graduated from Liberty High School (LHS) on O'ahu with a 3.0 GPA. Apparently, this school did not have a very good reputation. For instance, she remembered how LHS made the local news because of a fight that broke out between students from her school and another school. It was all too common. Yet, she admitted that there were some exceptional teachers at LHS. Her favorite teacher was an expository writing teacher who introduced the students to the concepts of "ethos, pathos and logos" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Using such sophisticated concepts, Paula felt a sense of accomplishment when she was able to articulate them successfully to analyze other writings. This teacher stood

out because she assigned interesting projects, encouraged the students to think critically, and "[s]he actually liked teaching, I think that's what really like affected me because it's like oh yeah, there, that's how, you know, there's a teacher that really cares about what they're doing" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). By the end of her junior year, Paula knew that she wanted to go to college so she decided to seek the aid of a school counselor. With her counselor's help, Paula got into a private, non-profit university right out of high school.

Individual attributes. As a child, Paula was insecure not only because her parents were often absent, but also because she was constantly being picked on by her cousins. Her insecurity was further exacerbated in high school and in college when her boyfriend at that time pursued other girls while he was still in a relationship with Paula. Paula admitted that she struggled with the desire to please others and tended to put others first: "Like I'm the type of person that's like really nice, would let people step all over me" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When Paula was in elementary school, she was shy, quiet, and afraid of being judged for asking questions in class. She could not rely on her mother for help with her homework so she suffered in silence. Things did not improve until she was in high school when a friend and some teachers insisted, "it's okay to ask for help, it's okay to not know something. So I was like, okay then, but I would meet with them after class because I didn't like raising my hand and asking a stupid question" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Initial commitment to college. Despite some of Paula's unfavorable pre-entry attributes, she seems to be committed to the goal of college completion at PCC when she first started. What Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema did not consider was students with prior college experience. His conceptual schema assumed that this was the student's first time in college. In Paula's case, it was her second time in college. In September 2011, right after graduating from

high school, Paula attended Ridge University (RU), a private, non-profit university for a year before dropping out, the details of which I describe below. This time around as a student at PCC, she felt more savvy about succeeding because of her past college experience.

Academic integration. As a PCC student, Paula was able to meet the college standards of grade and intellectual development with a GPA of 3.4. When I asked Paula if she took any developmental education courses, she said that she had not. However, during the second interview, she mentioned how a tutor could not help her do the "simplest math equations" (personal communication, March 3, 2016) for a very low-level math class. It sounded like she was in a remedial math class. Some students like Paula may not realize that they are taking developmental education courses.

Social integration. Paula successfully formed relationships with others at PCC. In addition to knowing a handful of students from high school, Paula was also able to form new friendships with her peers. Moreover, Paula communicated with her instructors at least twice a week by email or in person, and frequently checked in with her counselor. Although she was a commuter student, she made every effort to become well integrated into the social system at PCC. For that reason, she did not feel lonely or isolated on campus.

Modified commitment to college. Due to her high level of academic and social integration at PCC, Paula remained committed to completing her degree at PCC and transferring to GU in Fall 2017.

In conclusion, the process of academic and social integration seems to have played a big role in her commitment to college completion. Furthermore, it was important to note that Paula entered PCC in Fall 2014 with the same pre-entry attributes that she had when she entered RU in Fall 2011. Thus, if Paula graduates or transfers to a four-year institution, then it could be

assumed that retention is less dependent on her pre-entry attributes than it is on the longitudinal process of academic and social integration.

Maslow's Hierarchy as a Basis for Analysis

The question that Maslow's (1970) hierarchy poses when considering student retention in college is whether individuals have enough of their lower needs met so that they are able to focus on their higher needs. If their lower needs remain unmet or have to be revisited, then according to Maslow, individuals will abandon their higher needs in order to focus on fulfilling their basic needs.

Physiological needs and need for safety. Throughout Paula's life, she was able to fulfill the most basic need, her physiological needs. Even as a child, when Paula's mother left Paula home alone for days, there seems to have been enough food for her to fulfill this need. On the other hand, Paula's second most basic need, the need for safety, was not fully met when she was a child. In other words, she did not feel a sense of security, stability, dependency, order, and protection vital to meet her need for safety. Her father, who sometimes visited Paula on O'ahu, was not around for the most part. As for her mother, as I explained before, she was usually away from home working as a live-in caregiver. Paula remembered how insecure she felt when she was alone at home.

> Then late at night I would, cause I would get kind of scared just cause, cause we were renting, and like I felt alone and I felt like there was just nobody there. So I would call my friends, and stay on the phone with them, and like I'd even asked them, "Oh, can you just stay on the phone with me, maybe we can like fall asleep on the phone together" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Paula's grandmother meant well by intervening, but that only added to Paula's lack of stability since Paula's aunt sent Paula back to Hawai'i a year and a half after they moved her to California. Furthermore, Paula felt unsafe whenever she got together with her cousins on the neighbor island. As one of the youngest and most petite cousins, the others relentlessly teased Paula about not knowing who her father was. There was one cousin in the group, Thelma, who Paula thought she could count on. Thelma and Paula had a special relationship since they were born in the same month, the same year, and in the same hospital. They were best friends as when they were young. When Thelma moved from the neighbor island to O'ahu to go to college, Paula did everything that she could do to make Thelma feel comfortable in her new surroundings. Things changed between the two of them when Paula began drawing boundaries in order to preserve her own personal space. For example, Thelma would get upset whenever Paula chose to hang out with her boyfriend and not with Thelma. Thelma retaliated by telling the extended family some of Paula's most personal secrets. The tension continued to escalate until late one night when Thelma went to Paula's house to collect something that belonged to her. Paula could tell that Thelma was looking to start a fight but was still surprised when Thelma violently shoved her to the ground.

> Yeah and we were like on the concrete road so I was in shock because I did not see that coming, and I was like still on the ground, and she came up to me and like, I was, I was like on my side and she's like banged my head twice (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Caught off guard, Paula was unable to defend herself against her bigger cousin. Had it not been for Thelma's boyfriend intervening, Paula would have been severely injured. Paula

reflected on the incident and concluded, “I realize . . . [that] even though family is always there, like they are not always going to be like family” (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Paula’s life became more secure and stable once Paula’s father returned to the Philippines and her mother got married to another man. Paula’s father decided to go back to his wife and four children in the Philippines so that they could take care of him in his senior years. When I met Paula, she was living with her mother, stepfather, and older half-sister. Her family’s financial situation had finally improved and Paula seems happier that her mother could finally spend more time with her.

Need for love and belonging. Like Paula's need for safety, her need for love and belonging was also never fully satisfied as a young child. Paula said that she and her father were never really close but she missed him and fondly remembered how they would discuss politics. On the other hand, she also recalled how ashamed she was about his age.

> [H]e was like older and I felt embarrassed of him because I felt like no one else has a dad this much older than them or like this much older than their mother. I'm like, I just felt like whenever I introduced him to my friends, it was like “oh yeah this is my grandpa.” Yeah, and then my parents, like because I guess they were embarrassed of like how much older he was than my mom, I felt like they're kind of embarrassed of me (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

As a child, Paula longed to be accepted, attached, and loved by parents who were not embarrassed of their relationship and of her. Things have changed since then, as a young adult in college, Paula described her need for love and belonging being met by a mother who was very supportive of her endeavors.

> So my mom . . . for example this morning, I had to go get my oil changed for my car and I wanted to do the first appointment just so I could get it out of the way early in the day and I called my mom to see if she could pick me up from the auto shop and drop me off to school. And she was willing to, so that shows that she supports me going to school (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

Regardless of the mother's past behavior, Paula continued to exhibit unconditional love for her. She wanted her mother to be happy. It was the reason why Paula used some of her own savings to fly to the neighbor island to rescue her older half-sister.

> I brought her [Paula's sister] home because it was, it was like draining my mom and I could see how depressed she [Paula's mother] was because sometimes I like come home and she just be laying in bed and I know she'd be thinking about my sister (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Paula knew where to find her sister because Paula and her mother heard from relatives that Paula's sister was unemployed, recycling cans, and living in a broken-down car with a drug-addicted boyfriend. "Like because my sister was homeless and like our family would be . . . telling my mom like yeah you know your daughter she's so skinny, she's so dark" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). The relatives implied that Paula's sister was sick. At first, Paula's sister resisted leaving her boyfriend behind, fearing what he might do, but Paula persisted and lied, telling her sister that their mother was in the hospital. The sister finally agreed to fly back to Oʻahu with Paula.

> [S]o it's nice to see my mom have someone with her that's, that keeps her company cause . . . she misses her mom, her, my grandma but like having my sister there, they'll go to church together all the time" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Since her sister has settled down on O‘ahu, she has shown Paula gratitude by doing little things such as making lunch for Paula to take to school. As a result, Paula’s need to be accepted, attached, and loved by others was being met.

Yet, the effects of not feeling loved as a child still appeared in other areas of Paula’s life. When Paula was in high school, she fell in love with a man named Jacob who was two years older than she. He had a reputation for chasing women but Paula believed that she could “be that girl that would change him” (personal communication, February 25, 2016). She longed to be loved by him even though he could not hold down a job, did not like to work, and could not make ends meet. When Paula entered RU, she agreed to use the money from her part-time job to help him pay for his bills, food, and supplements so that he could participate in a body building competition. If that were not enough, Paula also helped him prepare for the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) exam. She spent so much of her time taking care of his needs that she ignored her own needs. After the first year at RU, she was placed on academic probation. Eventually, she was urged by a RU counselor to withdraw because she her GPA did not meet the academic standards of college. Regardless of her sacrifices, Jacob continued to flirt with other women. Still, that did not stop Paula from marrying him before he was deployed by the Navy. Interestingly enough, what led to their divorce a year-and-a-half later, was not Jacob’s unfaithfulness but Paula’s infidelity. She said that while he was away, she could not shake her insecurities about his unfaithfulness and felt upset about all the sacrifices she made for him. In response to feeling slighted, Paula decided to get revenge by sleeping with a man she met at a party; this man eventually became her new boyfriend.

> I was just being friendly with everybody and meeting everybody and talking story and I just met my boyfriend who I’m with now, and then he knew about who me and he, and

> he's like aren't you like married, aren't you in a relationship. I'm like yeah . . . and I was being really bad so I cheated on my ex-husband (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Paula showed no regret for her actions. She said that her current boyfriend was nothing like her ex-husband; he was independent, handled his own finances, and was extremely supportive of her going to college.

> [H]e only has friends that are guys. And if he does talk to girls, he knows his boundaries and it feels a whole lot more mature. And like right now I can, I don't feel like I have to worry about him, he's, I don't have to pay any bills for him like his family still takes care of him. He was raised well versus the guy I was with, like we were both raised not as well. So it's kind of hard when you, I felt like I had to take care of somebody. I didn't even know, I wasn't even taken care of by like my own parents, you know so it was hard (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In the last two sentences, Paula reflected on her failed marriage and realized that she was unable to support someone like herself whose need for love was not met in childhood. Later in the interview, she spoke about the importance of having her needs met before trying to satisfy someone else's needs: "[I]t's like that, that airplane gas mask example. Like before you put on other people's mask you have to put on your own because if you don't put yours on first, you can't help the person next to you" (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

Need for esteem. Paula admitted to having a low self-esteem. Part of the reason was because of the issues she had with her parents as well as her relatives. She never felt worthy knowing that her mother and father were embarrassed of their family. Furthermore, her cousins, even her once-favorite cousin Thelma, showed a lack of respect for her. Paula blamed herself for

allowing them to step all over her. What made matters worse was that in her early twenties, she did not perceive herself as being positively recognized by others. After all, she was already divorced and a college dropout.

Still, there were moments in Paula's life when her need for internal self-esteem was met. For example, in high school, Paula and her teammate were ecstatic when they placed first in a state competition for their presentation on CPR. This accolade gave her the confidence to pursue healthcare: "[J]ust to do basic CPR, that's pretty much the thing that you need to get into any kind of health job. So if I can do that then I can learn everything else" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). At PCC, Paula's need for esteem was also met when she was able to maintain a 3.4 GPA. Moreover, at work, she proved herself to be worthy and competent when she was promoted to be head cashier at the restaurant.

Self-actualization. On one hand, when I met Paula in 2016, she seems to have had all of her lower needs on the hierarchy somewhat met such that she could pursue her dream of earning a college degree to meet her need for self-actualization. On the other hand, Paula was also motivated to earn a college degree because it had the potential to satisfy some of her yet-unfulfilled lower needs. In other words, Paula may have been motivated to earn a college degree because it could lead to financial security and stability, which meant that her need for safety would be better satisfied. Also, Paula was motivated to earn a degree because she knew how pleased her mother would be if she were to graduate. It was evident that Paula still longed to be fully accepted, attached, and loved by her mother (need for love and belonging). Moreover, Paula was motivated to earn a degree because it could bring about positive recognition by others (need for esteem). How satisfying would it be to prove to her cousins that she was indeed someone to be respected? Lastly and most importantly, Paula was motivated to earn a college

degree because she could prove to herself that she was a strong, competent and independent woman capable of living life fully.

Self-Determination Theory as a Basis for Analysis

In contrast to Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, the self-determination theory did not indicate that individuals had to satisfy some lower needs before they were able to focus on college as a possible means to fulfill their higher needs. Instead, the self-determination theory implied that individuals were motivated to persist in college because at that particular institution, the individuals' three innate needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness were being met.

Competence. At first glance, it was questionable whether Paula's need for competence was being met at PCC, considering that she had to drop out of Zoology 141 and statistics. At the time of the interview she had not retaken statistics, but she did retake Zoology 141 and passed with an A. Indeed, her need for competence was being met. She also did well in Zoology 142. "I got an A in both my zoology classes. That was a nice feeling. It was really nice. I felt really accomplished and I was like yeah, if I can do this, I can finish and I will be able to get my degree" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). According to Deci et al. (1991), students felt competent when they were able to handle optimal challenges. Hence, it was vital that Paula perceived Zoology 142 as an optimal challenge rather than another course where she could possibly fail. Paula reasoned that since she passed Zoology 141, then she would most likely pass Zoology 142. To increase her chances of success, Paula chose to take the second zoology course from the same instructor.

> So like my zoology professor she'd tell us like you need to constantly study your questions and if you can answer them all and master them then you can pass the class but

> if you don't take the time to study then obviously you're going to fail and she like emphasizes that so, I think she's supportive (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

This instructor was able to entice students to participate in activities just above their comfort level because she emphasized that success was a result of effort; not fixed intelligence. In order to encourage students to persist, the instructor offered them a lot of positive feedback during their performance.

> I just got back my notebook or my write up from my lab, the cardiovascular one. And she [the instructor] would, when she graded it she'd put like what worked really well. So like my pictures, and my graphs were good and my explanations were good. . . . And whenever we get an A on our exam, she'd send us a personal email and be like "oh good job." Like "keep up the good work, you got an A on the exam, keep studying the way you're studying" (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

Paula's need for competence was being met in courses like her zoology class. She was faced with optimal challenges and received timely positive feedback from her instructors. When Paula's level of competency increased in a particular domain, she was ready to take on a more challenging task. When she succeeded at that challenging task, then her level of competency spiraled upwards leading her to persist further and to take on even more challenging tasks. It was what Stipek (2002) referred to as the perpetual upward spiral.

Autonomy. From the time she was a child, Paula had the autonomy to make her own decisions. For example, she had total control over her daily home life since there were no parents around to say otherwise. She chose what to eat, what to wear, what to do, and when to do it. She was in charge of her own actions.

> And then, I would get to my homework right away. When I come home from school, I get my homework done. And then after that I would like, I'd shower and eat and maybe watch TV a little and then I'd talk to my friends and then clean or something and that's all I would do (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Paula also had total autonomy when it came to school since her mother had only an elementary school education. In fact, her immigrant mother did not know what to expect from American schools. Paula recalled how her mother "didn't know what kind of questions to ask me versus just like, oh did you do your homework" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

After graduating from LHS in 2011, Paula chose to go to RU. It was important to note that one of the lessons that Paula learned was that with freedom of choice came responsibilities. Hence, Paula had the freedom to pick her own college, but she also had the burden of paying for her own tuition and fees. In Paula's case, the cost of college was expensive because RU was a private college. Hence, it was such a disappointment when she was forced to drop out after her first year. She ended up working full time at a restaurant for several years but never gave up on her dreams to earn a college degree.

> [A]nd then I realized I don't want to be really, really old going back to school because I know it's going to be harder. No, I was really scared of that because I was like, I, if I can do it now I would rather, I need to go back already (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In Fall 2014, Paula decided to enroll at PCC because it was the closest community college to her home and much cheaper than RU. This time around, Paula was determined to succeed by making college a priority.

Although it was true that Paula had much autonomy in her home life and school life, there was one thing that Paula did not have control over. That one thing was her major. Paula said that she chose nursing because her mother always wanted her to be a nurse. After all, her mother was a caregiver.

> [T]he original reason was because my mom was a nurse [caregiver] so I felt like I had to be a nurse . . . my mom didn't have me consider like thinking about other things . . . she didn't ask like, "oh, what about this or what about that?" So, I never really had a chance to think about anything else (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Considering that Paula was autonomous when she was growing up, it was surprising that she lacked control over a lifetime choice. Fortunately for Paula, as her mother got older, she became more flexible about allowing Paula to select her own occupation.

> [S]ometimes I would see what she would say so I'd be like, "oh mom, I'm going to change my major, I'm going to do this, this, this," just to see what she'd say and she was supportive of it, she just wants me to be like successful and not waste my time in school. Cause I tell her, "oh I want to be a teacher instead or I want to do this instead, you, can I do that?" And she's like "yeah just as long as you're happy and you're studying and not wasting your time" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

If her mother was being honest and truly supported Paula's choice in major, then Paula was free to pursue optometry instead of nursing. Since Paula would still be in healthcare, all of the classes she already took and paid for would count towards her new major. It seems like Paula was on the verge of deciding on a major knowing very well that she had to live with the consequences.

Another thought was that perhaps it was Paula who had chosen nursing as a profession in order to feel closer to her mother. She could have imagined this limitation of becoming a nurse as a way to tighten her bond with a mother who was actually indifferent about Paula's career choice.

Relatedness. Paula had a past personal history of successfully connecting with her peers. "[S]ometimes like your friends will like give you more than what your family could give you" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). As I mentioned before, when Paula was in elementary school, she often called her friends late at night to comfort her when she felt lonely. Then, when she was in middle school, she met a group of peers who played an important role in inspiring her to focus on her studies so that one day she too could go to college.

> [I]f it wasn't for the particular people that I met and stuck with, I don't think I would be who I am today. Because I could've been in any group and like I could have been involved in things that I felt could have held me back more from learning and stuff . . . just cause I wasn't raised the way they were. I, I don't know, I like took some of what they had in them and I just like used it because one of my friends was really organized and into school, her parents are really strict and I kind of stuck with her for, throughout high school, so we always like encouraged each other to be involved in like clubs and stuff, and she, cause she was like really smart. I wanted to be like her (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

As a student at PCC, Paula continued to successfully develop new connections with others on campus. One of the things that bonded her with others was that many of her peers were "going through the same things" (personal communication, March 3, 2016); that is, they seem to have the same fears and concerns about college as she did. At the same time, Paula

pointed out how different she was from the other students. For one, she was older than most incoming students. Furthermore, this was not her first time in college. Hence, as an older, more mature and experienced student, she has learned to be selective about befriending only studious classmates who were serious about school. Accordingly, these selected peers proved to be trustworthy. They studied with her, answered her phone calls, and took time out of their busy schedule to offer her advice. Paula felt like she could confide in them about her personal life.

Outside of class, Paula spent at least 20 hours a week on campus. She had a part-time job at the Students' Activities Center, which she strategically chose to do because it gave her the opportunity to connect with others on campus.

Besides taking the time to connect with peers, Paula also interacted regularly with faculty and staff members. By interacting with her instructors at least twice a week, she got to know them better. She felt like she could trust them because they seem to have her best interest in mind. Paula also took the time to build up her relationship with her counselor Patty. Patty was vital to Paula's success because she had a wealth of knowledge about various resources. Patty was Paula's institutional agent; that is, Patty was key to Paula's ability to navigate the college system successfully.

Integrated regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. According to Deci et al. (1991), integrated regulation was most reflective of intrinsic motivation. In Paula's case, she seems to be genuinely interested in becoming an optometrist. She claimed that this was the major she would choose if she had no restrictions and had the financial means to pursue her dreams. It was still extrinsically motivated since one of the driving factors to become an optometrist was the fact that she could maintain her autonomy by running her own business. This would not be possible if she were to pursue nursing. Paula's interest in healthcare

intensified when she was in high school. She joined the Health Occupational Students of America (HOSA) club and, as I mentioned earlier, won first place in the state competition. At that time, she believed that if she was competent in doing CPR, then she could do any healthcare job. Paula had a particular affinity for optometry because of her personal experience at the optometrist's office. She said that she really liked going there.

> I have like really bad eyesights or really bad vision and I've been going, I've been using glasses since 2011 so when I graduated high school. And I don't know, there's something about whenever I go to, to see my optometrist, it's a feel-good thing because it's bettering myself. And it's not scary like versus going to the dentist or getting a shot at that's where all the nurses are (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When she did research about the profession, she learned that it is one of the industries predicted to grow because of an increasing number of people using technology.

> Like people's vision are going to get worse if they keep looking at the screen and I am doing a research paper right now to see whether I do want to go into optometry or not because . . . my thesis is something along the lines of [GU] college students should monitor their screen time because it affects your eyes, your health and sleep time. I think it interferes with sleep time, so I'm trying to just do research on that (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

The reason why she was more interested in optometry than nursing was unclear. Perhaps she internalized the value of eye care more than she internalized the value of nursing because of her need to be self-determining; it was her choice and no one forced her to go into the field.

What held Paula back from pursuing her dreams was not only that her mother wished for her to become a nurse, but also the fact that it would take about eight years for her to become an

optometrist versus four years to become a nurse. Moreover, Paula would need to go to the mainland for college and it would be financially taxing.

Introjected regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. In comparison to Paula's personal desire to pursue optometry, her decision to go into nursing was an introjected regulation. In other words, the primary driving factor was the external contingency of pleasing her mother. At the same time, Paula's behavior was self-imposed. Although her mother had heavily influenced Paula to go into nursing, she was not forcing her to go into that field. Paula had chosen to acquiesce to her mother's wishes because she somewhat internalized the value of nursing over the years. It is not to say that she fully accepted it as her own. She liked the idea of being in healthcare but struggled to pursue a major that was never inherently valuable to her. On one hand, she knew that "they're always going to need nurses" (personal communication, February 25, 2016), and it would allow her to help people change their lives. On the other hand, she worried that she was making a mistake, "I don't know about nursing because I'm almost done with my prereqs but because I know that everyone's doing it, I feel like I want to branch off to something else but still science related" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Throughout the two interviews, Paula repeated her hesitations about nursing because of how competitive it was to get a job. It could be that Paula was truly concerned about the limited number of jobs in nursing or it could have been a way for her to legitimately get out of nursing without disappointing her mother. It was evident that Paula had a deep desire to please her mother by becoming a nurse. However, it was yet to be seen if her desire to please her mother would outweigh her interest in becoming an optometrist.

Identified regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. No one forced Paula to go back to college, it was her choice to return: "I took a year off and a year off was too long for me and

you don't want to wait too late" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). She was willing to go back to college because for the most part, she had internalized the once external value of earning a college degree into her own set of values and beliefs. Paula's internalization process was highly influenced by her high school friends who were all planning to go to college. She just wanted to keep up with them. "I'm going to see everybody, all of my friends and peers getting what they want to get. And then, I'm just stuck here like watching them all. I don't want to do that . . . I don't want to be left behind" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). She knew that earning a college degree would lead to financial success and the ability to afford her own family. That is to say, Paula did not pursue a college degree just for the love of learning; it was a means to an end.

Typical of students with an identified regulation, Paula exhibited a positive attitude about her schoolwork and accepted responsibility for the outcomes. For that reason, she met the college's academic standards. It helped that the instructors at PCC provided Paula optimal challenges and some sort of support. For example, in her political science class, Paula was encouraged to explore political events that peaked her curiosity.

> [A]s the professor started talking about different problems in the world and our state, it like opened up my mind to new things because it was absolutely nothing that I knew about and I, I've heard about these things but I never actually seen it in his perspective so it was really, it was new and just, it was a little hard at first because he like, there were so many assignments that we like could do [or] had to do so I didn't really know how to organize myself in his class just because I didn't know like where to start and you don't really know what grade you have until the end of the course so it's kind of hard because I,

I didn't really know if I was passing or failing but I found out that I ended up getting an A in his class (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

In this less than perfectly organized class, Paula was motivated to persist and achieve high levels of academic achievement because of the instructor's ability to pique her interest in the subject matter. Although he failed to provide timely feedback, he was diligent about creating optimal challenges for the students. Later in the interview, Paula recounted how inspired she was by his class that she decided to register to vote in the next election.

In conclusion, Paula persisted at PCC because her psychological need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness were being met. Thus, Paula was energized to continue to be involved in activities and relationships at PCC. The only need that still needed to be addressed was her need for autonomy to choose her own major. As she got closer to transferring to a four-year institution, Paula was beginning to realize that she would have to make a choice soon.

Expectancy-Value Theory as a Basis for Analysis

The expectancy-value theory (Atkinson, 1957) said that individuals who perceived that a particular act was instrumental to attaining a goal would be motivated to persist. Therefore, when it came to pressing on in college, the students' level of persistence, their strength of motivation, and vigor of performance depended on the individuals' expectancy, incentive, and motive.

Expectancy. Many college students believed that their outcome expectancy would come to pass; that is, they believed that going to college would result in a college degree, which in turn would ultimately qualify them to get into a job in their respective field. Paula was no exception. Her outcome expectancy matched her efficacy expectation. She believed that she had the ability to perform a particular act that would bring about a desirable outcome. More specifically, Paula

believed that if she completed her prerequisites at PCC, then she would be able to transfer into a nursing program at a four-year institution, earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and get a job as a nurse. If she chose to go into optometry, then it would be a little more complicated. She would need to finish her prerequisites at PCC, transfer to a four-year university, earn a bachelor's degree, transfer to an optometry school on the mainland, earn a four-year post baccalaureate Doctor of Optometry degree, and sit for a licensure exam. In both plans, the most unchallenging part of it was to finish her prerequisites at PCC.

Therefore, during Paula's first semester at PCC, she was eager to make up for lost time. She registered for five classes, kept her job at the restaurant, and started working on campus at the Students' Activities Center – in addition to commuting by bus. "I thought I would have been able to bang it all out one time so I had family resources, microbiology, I was taking math too, zoology lecture and zoology lab" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). Unfortunately, things did not go according to plan. Notably, Paula was not able to keep up with the assignments, she was typically late to work at the restaurant since the bus ran behind schedule, she had to stay after her scheduled work time to make up for the time lost, which then cut into her already limited study time. "I just wanted to do everything cause I thought I would have been able to get everything done" (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

As a person with high self-efficacy when it came to academics, Paula knew she had to change her strategy in order to stay in school. By her third semester, she had cut back on the number of hours she worked at the restaurant to no more than 25 hours a week, took only three or four classes a semester, and got her driver's license. She still kept her 20 hours a week on-campus job at the Students' Activities Center because of her financial need; however, she was

able to carve out more time to study by cutting down on the amount of time she spent with her boyfriend, friends, and family.

Paula did not have to change her expectations of obtaining a degree, but she did have to change her timeline and strategy to be successful. It was as if students like Paula got so caught up in their macro-level expectations and plans that they forgot that it was their present day-to-day management of their time and effort that would either make or break them. In Paula's case, she was hoping to rush through the prerequisites at PCC so that she could transfer to a four-year university and be on her way to becoming a nurse or optometrist.

Paula would need to adjust her outcome expectancy if her 3.4 GPA proved inadequate to get her into the nursing program at GU. When comparing herself with her classmates, Paula believed that she was doing all right. "I'm not doing bad, I'm not failing. I'm not at a C, I'm at a B, so not too bad" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). However, the unspoken minimum GPA to get into a competitive nursing program such as the one at GU may be a lot higher since there were more students interested in getting into the program than there were spots available.

High self-efficacy. Despite past setbacks and failures in college, Paula adamantly believed that she had the skills and cognitive ability to accomplish her academic goals and to major in nursing or optometry. She based this belief on her past performance in high school where she maintained a 3.0 average, placed first in a HOSA state competition, and got into RU right out of high school. When she dropped out of RU, she attributed it to her boyfriend who distracted her from school; it was not because of a lack of skills or aptitude. Learning from her past experiences, she became more cognizant about choosing friends who would not distract her from studying. Paula did not usually struggle with test anxiety, but when she felt anxious, she

resorted to effective breathing techniques. Furthermore, she developed a detailed organizational system to better manage her time so that she could better prepare for exams.

> Sounds corny but I have my planner. . . I try to write everything because when I don't have my planner, I feel like, it's kind of hard to try to keep track of everything in my head. So it's better for me when I write things down. And I color code everything -- post-its. So that's how I try. I communicate with my boyfriend, sometimes when I like, I can't see you like or I have to stay at school longer like is that okay and he'll be like, "okay." With work . . . everybody that knows me, knows that I put my school first (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Incentive and values. In Paula's case there was no indication that she believed in an inverse relationship between expectancy and value; rather she chose nursing because she somewhat internalized the value of being a nurse and believed that she could succeed in this field. There seems to be a positive relationship between expectancy and value.

In contrast, Paula's interest in becoming an optometrist was an inverse relationship between expectancy and value. In other words, Paula could have been attracted to optometry because she knew that it was a much harder field to get into and the probability of success was low. If only she had enough financial resources, time, and the opportunity to study at a mainland college, then perhaps she could accomplish something this demanding.

Cost value. In order to maintain a high GPA at PCC, Paula had to cut back on the number of hours she worked at the restaurant. The problem was that the fewer hours she worked, the less money she earned. She was alos concerned that refusing more hours and avoiding the dinner rush could affect her chances of being promoted at the restaurant.

> I felt like they're evaluating me as the kind of worker I am. If I say no then I can like lose, I could just, I feel like I couldn't be able to move up (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Paula also had to sacrifice fun recreational activities that others seem to be enjoying: "I think social media has . . . a part in it too because it's like you see people doing stuff that aren't homework related and it's like 'oh I want to do that instead'" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). It is what Zimmerman and Schunk (2008) referred to as self-regulated learning where the person was willing to sacrifice present temptations in order to achieve long-term goals. Paula realized that she was getting older and if she wanted to achieve her academic goals and career goals, she had to focus on college. The cost of not succeeding in college this time around meant that she would never become the nurse or optometrist she hoped to be; instead she would have to settle for a certificate in nursing assistant.

On the other end of the spectrum, if Paula were to pursue her dream job of becoming an optometrist, then she would not only have to earn a bachelor's degree but also a Doctor of Optometry degree as well. That would mean that she has to move to the mainland and spend another four years in optometry school. The opportunity cost of becoming an optometrist would be much higher than the opportunity cost of becoming a nurse.

Attainment value. One of the first indications that Paula could be successful in the field of healthcare was when she placed first in the HOSA competition. This was a key event for Paula because she successfully displayed how competent she perceived herself to be in science. She proved to herself and to others that she had the skills and knowledge to work in healthcare. In college, she displayed her competency when she got As in Zoology 141 and 142, as well as when she was able to maintain a 3.4 cumulative GPA. Outwardly displaying her level of

competency to others was especially important since Paula dropped out of RU several years prior.

Intrinsic value. I previously discussed Paula's interest in optometry in depth under the self-determination theory. A common thread among her possible choices of majors, what she did for her ex-husband, and what she did for her half-sister was the satisfaction she gained by helping others. Due to her personal childhood experience of caring for herself, she seems to empathize with other people's struggles. "I want to do something where I can change someone's life. Cause if I can do it to one person, imagine how much other people I can affect you know" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Utility value. Much of Paula's utility values come from lessons she learned at RU. At PCC, Paula pushed herself to do well in all of her classes even if some of them were uninteresting because she knew that if she persisted she could achieve her long-term academic goals. In her social life, Paula consciously selected friends who were not a distraction from college. One could say that they served as a means to an end. One could also say that she selected friends who held compatible goals and understood what kind of sacrifices needed to be made at the present time in order to reap the benefits at a later time.

> I make friends in class so I try to like, I don't know, it's kind of bad but judge who would be a good, a good student in class so that they can, they can encourage me to do well in school too. Cause if I, if I surround myself with people that don't really put school first, I feel like they would want to do like participate in activities and put homework off and I don't want to do that again (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

Motive. Besides expectancy and incentive, the third factor in Atkinson's (1957) expectancy-value theory was motive. It referred to the person's drive to either achieve success

or avoid failure. Atkinson's theory stated that people who strived to achieve success tended to choose tasks that were of intermediate difficulty; whereas, people who strived to avoid failure chose the easiest or most difficult tasks in order to avoid being humiliated.

In Paula's case, the very act of returning to college after being academically suspended from RU demonstrated her commitment to achieve success. If she were striving to avoid failure, then she would have avoided college and wiped out all possibilities of failing and being humiliated again. Nevertheless, it was interesting that she chose to enroll at a two-year community college instead of another four-year institution like RU. It may have been her attempt to perform at an intermediate level of difficulty; rather than take on classes at another institution that were too demanding. Then again, perhaps she had no choice but to attend a community college because of its lower tuition and open-door policy of accepting students like her who dropped out of another college. In any case, Paula's intention was to succeed this time around.

> I try to make sure I don't fail my class because I know that once I fail, I don't have a way to like make myself get back versus if I'm doing good in school, and I have like at least Bs then . . . it gives me something to support myself, to say like I should continue because I'm doing, this how I'm doing in school (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In the last part of her statement above, she referred to the importance of doing well in class to justify her action of persisting in college. She remembers how she "just kept going downhill" at RU since her "priorities weren't straight" and she was not "organized and on top of things" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). By preventing this downward spiral from happening again, Paula increased her chances for success.

Furthermore, like others striving to achieve success in college, Paula perceived classes that were too easy as a waste of time and money: "[I]t doesn't benefit you because you're still in the same position and you're just, you're just putting a face on for everybody and only fooling yourself because you already know the material" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). Hence, she chose classes that covered some new theories and concepts just above her level of knowledge.

In short, there was no doubt that Paula was striving to achieve success when it came to graduating from PCC with an associate's degree. On the other hand, I was suspect that Paula was actually striving to avoid failure when it came to choosing a major. According to Atkinson (1957), individuals with a motive to avoid failure chose the least threatening task where they were likely to succeed or the most difficult improbable task where there was little chance for success. In both cases, they were able to avoid shame and humiliation. If Paula perceived herself at best as a B student based on her prior high school GPA (3.0) and her current GPA at PCC (3.4), then she may have known that she had a slim chance of getting into nursing school at GU. Furthermore, her chances were even slimmer if the nursing school took into account her academic suspension at RU. Rather than facing humiliation, disappointing her mother, and losing her sense of self-dignity in the process of being rejected by GU's School of Nursing, it would be better if she acted like she was not really interested in getting into nursing school, but was just going through the motion for her mother's sake. Without putting in a lot of effort, her failure could be attributed to a lack of effort rather than a lack of abilities and aptitude. She could still preserve her self-dignity even if she did not get into the nursing school at GU.

As for becoming an optometrist, it required an even higher GPA than nursing, not to mention the additional four years of post baccalaureate studies to earn a Doctor of Optometry

degree; the ability to afford approximately $40,000 a year non-resident tuition, fees, books and clinic equipment; and a licensure exam. It would be an extremely difficult task, such that no one could blame Paula if she were unable to complete the program or unable to succeed. Once again, she would be able to preserve her self-dignity if she were to fail. What seems odd was that she was not very concerned about what it would take to become an optometrist but rather more concerned about her chances of succeeding as a practicing optometrist in Hawai‘i.

> [I]t's hard, it'll be hard opening up like having my own company because usually I noticed that a lot of companies that have their own optometry, it's like family-run so they'll pass it down to their family kind of thing. And that's like the, like that's usually a whole lot more successful than opening up your own because then you'd have to start from scratch and like it's hard because in Hawai‘i especially, people will go to like the, the one doctor that they've seen a lot and people will recommend it versus like someone new that's opening up. Like I could lose money versus make more money opening up my own, but then I could also be under a doctor (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

On the other hand, perhaps, it was because she was just beginning to think about optometry as a possible major and did not know enough about the expectations. After all, she did say, "I really haven't thought about it yet but I did think about going into optometry" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). In fact, she just met with a counselor at GU and found out that she had to take a lot of advanced science and math classes if she were to pursue this pathway. All she knew was that she would have to go to the mainland for optometry school, stay in school longer, and pay higher tuition and fees.

In conclusion, Atkinson's (1957) motivation formula was based on the function of motive, expectancy, and incentive. I took the liberty to expand incentive to include Eccles and Wigfield's (2002) cost value, attainment value, intrinsic value, and utility value. Using a combination of the formula in Atkinson's expectancy-value theory and Eccles and Wigfield's adaptation to the expectancy-value theory to determine Paula's level of persistence in college, I looked at her efficacy expectancy, positive relationship between expectancy and value, and motive to achieve success. It would be safe to say that Paula would most likely graduate from PCC. As for her becoming a nurse, it was questionable if she would indeed go down this pathway. It was also questionable whether she could actually pursue optometry given the amount of obstacles she would have to overcome to achieve this goal.

Attribution Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Weiner's (2010) attribution theory took into account how an event made the individual feel. Events that resulted in happiness were deemed positive outcome dependent affects and events that resulted in unhappiness or frustration were labeled negative outcome dependent affects. Individuals were driven to determine what caused the outcome especially when they were unexpected. They used this information to decide how much effort to exert, how active to be, how long to persist, and what to strive for. In Paula's case, she shared with me several outcomes with positive outcome dependent affects and an outcome with a negative outcome dependent affect. As she reflected about the outcomes, she shared what she thought caused them. It was important to note that in this section, I did not discuss her marriage again since I already covered it in-depth under Maslow's (1970) hierarchy.

Paula was happy when she got into RU. She attributed much of her success to her initiative to meet with her high school counselor almost every single day. In comparison to other

students, the counselor really got to know her and was able to advise her in ways to improve her chances of getting into college. Thus, the amount of time and effort (internal, unstable, controllable attribute) that Paula spent on getting to know her counselor paid off. Paula also attributed her desire to go to college to her friends (external, stable, uncontrollable attribute) from middle school. It was a fortuitous event to have met them. Her friends were her role models and Paula wanted to be just like them. Her motto was, "[I]f they can do it, then I can do it too" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When Paula's grades began to slide in her second semester at RU, she was placed on academic suspension. She attributed her failure to her boyfriend. It was his fault for expecting her to help him prepare for the ASVAB exam. It was also his fault for expecting her to work so that he could afford to enter a body building competition. Weiner (2010) said that is not unusual for individuals, like Paula, to accept credit for their own personal successes but blame other people for their failures or setbacks. This is referred to as hedonic bias. She believed that the causal dimensions for her downfall was external, stable, and uncontrollable. That is, her boyfriend was the external factor that caused her to fail. It was a stable factor since he was not going to change his expectations, and his actions were beyond her control. In short, Paula believed that she was a victim. She was surprised and angry to have failed at RU since she expected to succeed. After all, she had exerted so much effort getting into college.

When Paula and I discussed her downfall at RU, she revealed that there were actually other factors that also contributed to her academic suspension. She admitted that she struggled to concentrate on her schoolwork because once she graduated from high school, she suddenly had the freedom to do fun things. As she began to form a habit of putting aside her studies, her grades went down. Once her grades went down, she began to care less and less about school.

Her priorities were skewed as she put her relationship with boyfriend, friends, and family first. Rather than doing what she was supposed to do -- study -- she was more interested in doing what she wanted to do. It also did not help that she neglected to build a good relationship with her counselor at RU who could have steered her back on track. In this sense, Paula failed because of a lack of effort. It was internal, unstable, and controllable. The good news was that at any time, Paula could take control over her outcome by putting more effort into her schoolwork.

She did just that in 2014, when Paula decided to go back to college. One of the first classes she took was a developmental math class. She was hesitant about this class because her past personal history had convinced her that she was poor at math. "I remember that I was not, I was just like 'I, I suck at math, I'm not going to, I'm not good'" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). It did not help that her peer math tutor teased her about the level being too low for him to assist her with any math problems. Confused and humiliated, Paula made the effort to teach herself the math concepts by reviewing her class notes. When Paula passed the class, she proved to herself that doing poorly in math was due to an internal, unstable, controllable attribute, meaning that it was not her ability that dictated how well she could do in a subject, but how much effort she put into it.

> And I actually understood it so it's like oh it's not about whether you're bad or not, it's about whether you want to take the time to actually learn something or not. That's what I thought because I used to use the excuse with, "oh, I'm bad at history," or "I'm bad at everything, so I'm not be good at anything." Plus I think if you have that mindset you're already not going to do well (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

Paula was proud to be able to maintain a 3.4 GPA at PCC. It was a long journey but she had learned from her past experience at RU. She was not a straight A student but she was doing

better than many other students. There were no signs of learned helplessness. This time around, she put school first, work second, and relationships last. She did not attribute her success to luck but to the amount of effort she put into her schoolwork. She sat in the front of the class, took notes, turned in her assignments on time, participated in class, reviewed her notes after class, and studied until midnight. When she had questions, she actively sought out the instructor. This was a big change from her younger days when she used to avoid asking the teacher any questions. She actively worked to understand the concepts. At home, she carved out a study spot for herself and set a rule that no one was to bother her when she was studying. She attributed her success to internal, unstable, controllable attributes such as her mindset, the amount of effort she exerted, being organized, and putting her needs above others. It was not to say that she did not still struggle with time management and the desire to please others. There were also external factors that contributed to her being successful. For one, she received a Pell Grant to offset the cost of school since she was solely responsible for her tuition and fees. Second, she relied on her counselor to keep her on a straight and narrow path. Third, she finally had a supportive manager at the restaurant who was a college graduate and knew how much effort and time it took to graduate from college.

In conclusion, Paula learned from her past experience at RU that the path to academic success was unstable and if she were to neglect her studies, then it could take a turn for the worse. She believed that her academic success depended not on her past personal history, but on the amount of effort she put into her schoolwork. Achieving her academic goals was generally an internal, unstable, controllable process; that is, she controlled how long she would persist, how active she would be in the learning process, and how much effort she would exert. She also

learned that she needed to be aware of the external factors that could help her in the process or hinder her from succeeding.

Self-Theory as a Basis for Analysis

According to Paula, intelligence and ability could be significantly changed "because like we have so much access to all these things that can open up our minds more about different things" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). Thus, Paula believed that intelligence was malleable and could be developed in the right environment. Paula was not afraid of taking risks and initiating new tasks as evidenced by her decision to return to college. Paula was also not afraid to fail. It was not to say that failing a class did not disappoint or worry her, but she knew that failing was part of the process of learning.

> I'd rather learn something new and maybe fail, probably fail and then just learn from it because I feel the only way you can, I mean that's how I succeeded, I had so many failures, and I'm probably still going to have another one right around the corner (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

In areas where she has failed before, she learned to exert more effort. It worked when she took developmental math and learned the math concepts by herself, and when she retook Zoology 141 and passed with an A.

It was unclear what kind of praises Paula received as a child from her parents and teachers; however, as a college student, Paula received effort praises from her mother such as "good job" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). Paula insinuated that all the way up to high school, her mother did not say much about her schoolwork. Therefore, although Dweck (2002) differentiated between praises, Paula was just happy to be praised: "mom notices that I'm

doing well, I should keep doing well because she cares and she's not just like ignoring it, and [it] makes me feel noticed by her" (personal communication, March 3, 2016).

At PCC, Paula's instructor gave her effort praises such as "good job," and strategy praises like "this works really well" and "keep up the good work, you got an A on the exam, keep studying the way you're studying" (personal communication, March 3, 2016). It endorsed Paula's growth mindset that success was determined by the amount of work she put into the task. It also let her know that the instructors at PCC were there to not to judge her, but to encourage and support her as she took on greater challenges.

Dweck's (1975) self-theory explained why Paula continued to be motivated to succeed even though she was placed on academic suspension at RU and failed several classes at PCC. It was her growth mindset that made her believe that she could still become a nurse or an optometrist. In fact, failure was not an end, but a lesson to be learned along the way. Paula believed that she could always do better and perceived no limit as to what she wanted to achieve.

Closing Comments

I asked Paula why she thought students dropped out of college and what made her persevere at PCC. She explained that the reason why she dropped out of RU was because she did not have her priorities straight. For that reason, her grades slipped to the point where she could no longer qualify for financial aid nor could she afford to pay for tuition on her own. This time around, Paula was determined to persevere in college so that she could make her mother proud. She persevered because she wanted to be successful and be a role model for the next generation in her family.

Findings and Analysis for Lori

Tinto's Conceptual Schema as a Basis for Analysis

According to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, Lori's commitment to college was shaped by her pre-entry attributes as well as her longitudinal process of engagement in the academic and social systems.

Family background. Lori was from a working class family. Her mother was a single parent with no college education who could never find a good-paying stable job; instead she had to work long non-traditional hours often at more than one place. Childhood was a traumatic time for Lori not only because her mother was rarely at home, but also because her mother had an authoritarian style of parenting.

> [I]t was kind of stressful because she had too much rules. And she, we didn't have an open communication because she was so her way, no other way. I'm the parent, you're the child. Yeah, so it made it really hard, yeah. So it wasn't like the best conducive environment where you could ask questions or grow or develop (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

By the time Lori was in the second grade, her older half-sister had already moved out. The sister was 18 at the time she left home. From then on, it was only Lori and her mother. Around the age of 15, Lori moved out of her mother's house and rented a place of her own. She could no longer endure living by her mother's rules and philosophy that "children are to be seen and not heard" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). Despite her hardships, Lori believed that her mother was just trying to prepare her for life the best way she could. "[S]chool or college was never emphasized. Yeah, it was always, when you become an adult, you better learn how to fend for yourself and make your own money" (personal communication, February

22, 2016). Needless to say, Lori's mother was not involved in Lori's schooling. She did not stress the importance of grades or success in academics, and never talked to Lori about what she wanted to be when she grew up. It was understood that once Lori graduated from high school, she would work and contribute to their family of two. Lori's response was, "as soon as I started making money when I was 15 and a half, I just moved out. I wasn't about to work my twenty-something hours and give her my paychecks" (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Precollege schooling. Lori remembered how her mother would always move them to a location near her latest job. Consequently, Lori attended two elementary schools, three middle schools, and four high schools. Lori recalled what each high school was like. She said that the first high school she attended as a freshman was focused on sports. It was also the only high school with a gang problem where members divided themselves based on ethnicity. The second high school she went to as a sophomore was focused on preparing the students for college or a career. Because the school was one of the newer schools on the island, it was set up to encourage students to explore computer science as a career, and to use technology in fun and creative ways. In her junior year, Lori went to yet another high school where she got along with her classmates. Her only critique of that school was that she did not like its curriculum. The worst school she attended was Wake High School (WHS) in her senior year. Lori said that it was difficult to make friends there. In 2005, Lori was happy to finally get out of high school. Despite her yearly change of schools, she graduated with a 4.0 GPA at WHS.

Individual attributes. Lori was flexible and able to adapt to new environments as evident when she moved from school to school. Moreover, she was independent and capable of taking care of herself. At the same time, she was realistic about what it took to afford a family in Hawai‘i. Her mother's experiences warned her that women without college degrees were

susceptible to a lifetime of unstable jobs, jobs requiring long nontraditional hours, or multiple jobs just to make ends meet. For that reason, Lori decided that she would aim to go to college and enter an occupation where she would be financially comfortable.

Initial commitment to college. Having dropped out the first two times, this was Lori's third time in college. Although Lori's family background and precollege schooling did not work to her advantage, she did graduate from WHS with a 4.0 and she had favorable individual attributes. It was important to note that her family background, precollege schooling, and individual attributes did not change from the first two times she went to college and dropped out. Applying Tinto's (1975) schema, if she succeeded this time around, then it must be because of the process of being academically and socially integrated. In 2014, when Lori began her third college experience, she seems to be committed to the goal of completion at SCC.

Academic integration. As a student at SCC with a 4.0 GPA, it was obvious that Lori was able to meet the college's standards of grades and intellectual development. Her GPA at SCC did not reflect an aggregation of her prior grades at Diamond Community College (DCC) and City Community College (CCC). That was because each time she went to a different community college, her prior grades did not transfer and she was able to start over again with a clean slate. For that reason, at SCC, Lori qualified to be on the dean's list, in the honor's program, and a member of Phi Theta Kappa.

Social integration. Lori was socially integrated at SCC. That is, she belonged to a network of peers, administrators, staff, and instructors. Lori described herself as highly involved as a student, part-time worker, and volunteer.

> I think having to be engaged in school, you, if you have your fellow faculty or peers, and if you're kind of falling in like a slump or whatever, they kind of help you. And I think

that's really important to build your network that way. That way if you're just so secluded, you only you're reliant on your self, and you don't have any other support. I think having that kind of network helps you succeed in school (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Modified commitment to college. The process of academic and social integration at SCC only fueled Lori's commitment to earn a college degree this third time around. The first two times she enrolled in college, she was unable to successfully integrate into the academic system and was forced to withdraw because of work.

In conclusion, Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema called attention to Lori's family background, precollege schooling, and academic integration as factors that could negatively affect Lori's commitment to the goal of degree completion at SCC. When I suggested that commitment could have played a role in dropping out the first two times at DCC and CCC, Lori was offended. She explained that she was always committed to earning a college degree and she was competent enough to do the work, but at that time, she had to work full-time to support herself. "I was just so exhausted like, I was committed but just I was just so tired." (personal communication, March 14, 2016). Hence, Tinto's conceptual schema identified her unsuccessful integration into the academic system but failed to further investigate the reason why Lori was not academically integrated. In Lori's case it had nothing to do with a lack of capability to do college level work or a lack of commitment; rather it was because she had to work to support herself. Lori was unable, not unwilling, to make college a priority.

Maslow's Hierarchy as a Basis for Analysis

Unlike Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, Maslow's (1970) hierarchy was not designed to specifically answer why a student persisted or dropped out of college. However, Maslow's

hierarchy did explain why people were intrinsically driven to fulfill certain needs. In order to better understand the role that motivation played in a student's decision to persist in college, Maslow's hierarchy featured factors that were often overlooked in other motivational theories.

Physiological needs and need for safety. The most basic needs were physiological. Lori gave no indication that her physiological needs were unmet as a child living with her mother. However, when she moved out at 15, she suddenly had to do whatever was necessary to make enough money to survive. Lori said that sometimes she had to work two or three jobs just to make ends meet.

Lori remembered what it was like growing up in a home that did not meet her need for safety. She said that her mother was tired and burnt out. Her mother created a disruption whenever she moved Lori from place to place, and at the same time she tried to maintain order by enforcing strict rules upon Lori. This sort of conflicting behavior made Lori fearful and anxious. When Lori finally moved out, she no longer had to worry about her mother's rules or relocating from place to place; however, she still had to worry about her safety since she was suddenly on her own with no one to turn to, no one to depend on, and no one to protect her.

When I interviewed Lori in 2016, things had changed for the better; that is, her physiological needs and need for safety were being met. She was living with her boyfriend and her two children at that time. Her boyfriend, who worked in construction, provided them with financial security; he was able to provide for their physiological needs and need for safety. Lori did her part to supplement their income by applying for scholarships and grants to pay for the cost of college, and by working part-time. She currently lived in a safe upper middle-class neighborhood. At SCC, Lori said that she felt safe because there were no homeless people on

campus. In the classroom, Lori thought that her instructors provided the students with enough order and stability so that they could focus on learning.

Need for love and belonging. Lori's need for love and belonging was not fully met as a child in her strained relationship with her mother. Moreover, she did not seem to have a close relationship with her two half-sisters and she had no relationship with her biological father.

At the various schools she attended, Lori made every effort to feel a sense of belonging. She learned how to quickly get along with others and form new friendships. At some schools, Lori found it easier to make friends than at other schools: "[I]t just depended on the people that go to the schools" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). The most challenging time was at WHS. "So when I was like a senior, when I transferred to [WHS], it was really hard to make friends there" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). For that reason, Lori was grateful to meet a counselor at WHS who made Lori feel like she belonged. When Lori enrolled in classes at SCC, she was quickly able to form relationships with peers, faculty, staff and administrators.

When I met Lori, her need to be accepted, attached, and loved was largely being satisfied by her boyfriend, her two children, and contacts at SCC. Yet, no matter how old Lori was, she still longed to be loved and accepted by her mother. Unfortunately, their relationship remained to be without "that open line of communication" (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Need for esteem. Even though Lori's need for belonging was not met at WHS, her need for esteem was met as she excelled in AP English and graduated with a 4.0 GPA. With stellar grades, she had reason to be recognized by others as strong, worthy, competent, capable, and independent. Contrary to what I expected, Lori's mother dismissed Lori's academic ability as "that's what's expected kind of thing" (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Nevertheless, Lori carried that internal self-esteem with her to college. Even though she was not academically integrated the first two times in college, she always knew that she could do the work. When she began taking classes at SCC, she was able to prove her capabilities to herself and to others. In class, her peers recognized her as a conscientious responsible older student.

> I'm the person to go to for assignments because I always like in every class like, "oh, do you have notes," or uhm, you know, "what's the assignment?" Like I always know what's upcoming and what's, like people ask me, so they always know that I know what's coming out for the assignment or what's expected. I feel like they always turn to me (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

What further satisfied her need for esteem was the respect and prestige she got as a student assistant and peer mentor for the Pathway to Success Project. Her role was to assist the academic advisor with all Native Hawaiian students on campus who were in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program or in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program.

Lori was able to complete all of her coursework requirements in a year and a half by taking 18-20 credits a semester. When I met her, she said that she would be graduating with honors at the end of the semester with an associate's degree in science and an associate's degree in natural science. Lori was especially happy to have achieved her academic goal: "I've achieved my 4.0 so like I have like the Dean's List" (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Self-actualization. At the top of Maslow's (1970) hierarchy was the person's need for self-actualization. It required that all of Lori's lower needs were at least partially satisfied. If Lori were to do what she really loved to do, then she would have become a neurosurgeon or

cardiovascular surgeon. Becoming a surgeon would have been the perfect job for her because she loved the challenge of being in medicine and working with the human body. "Yeah, it's so fascinating. Like I got to go to, we got to go to [the School of Medicine], and we got to see the cadavers and I just was like in love with it" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). However, with two young children to support and a limited budget, Lori dismissed her aspirations to become a surgeon as a far-fetched dream.

Now, Lori's career goal was to become a dental hygienist. She was still in a position to help others, be involved in the field of medicine, and work with the human body. Later in life, when her career in dental hygiene starts to wind down, Lori wants to become a counselor at GU and use her experience to help other prospective dental hygienists achieve their academic goals. This life goal was most likely inspired by the WHS counselor who helped Lori, as well as by her personal experience as a student assistant for the Pathway to Success Project.

In conclusion, when Lori entered SCC all of her lower needs were at least partially satisfied and she was able to make college her priority. In contrast, the first two times Lori was in college, she had to address her physiological needs and need for safety before she could focus on college as a means to meet her higher need for esteem and self-actualization. Thus, according to Maslow's hierarchy, it was natural for her to prioritize work over college. It was not to say that people could not work and go to school at the same time, but when earning enough money to afford the basic necessities was a priority, then it was more likely the student would drop out of school rather than resign from a job.

Self-Determination Theory as a Basis for Analysis

The self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991) claimed that individuals participate in activities and engage with others when their three innate psychological needs are being met.

Thus, the question about persistence at a community college focused on whether Lori's three innate psychological needs were being met at SCC.

Competence. When Lori took the COMPASS exam at SCC, she was placed into Math 22, a developmental math course. She was not surprised, considering her past history with that subject. She remembered struggling in math when she was in middle school. She also remembered how disappointed she was when her mother could not help her with her homework. In high school, Lori avoided math and took only the minimum requirements. By the time she started taking classes at SCC, it had been eight years since Lori had last taken classes at a community college. She knew that she would eventually have to face her greatest fear, college math. She was up for the optimal challenge. Lori succeeded by completing Math 22, Math 82, and Math 100 in one and a half semesters. Despite her initial concern that she would not be able to handle college math or retain and grasp new information, Lori proved herself competent by maintaining a perfect GPA. She explained that she did well in her classes because she was older than the average student, and knew what the instructors expected. Her effort was rewarded with positive feedback and good grades.

The semester I interviewed her, she was enrolled in pharmacology, a writing intensive leadership course, honors intercultural communications, and Hawaiian fiber arts. Of the four classes, she was only required to take pharmacology, the other three were electives. When I asked her why she took three challenging electives, she replied that she did not like to remain stagnant; she liked a good challenge. That was exactly what Lori got as a student at SCC. She was on an upward spiral of new feats and challenges.

Autonomy. When Lori was a child, she had little control over her life. She lived in constant fear of her mother and suffered the consequences for not following the rules. Lori

gained greater control over her life when she moved out. At 15 years old, it was difficult for her to be independent, but her need for autonomy overrode the hardships she had to endure. At 18 years old, Lori enrolled at DCC, dropped out, and then enrolled at CCC, where she also dropped out. She was devastated by the setbacks but at least she had her autonomy and was making her own decisions.

At 24 years old, Lori finally felt like she was in control of her own life. She applied for financial aid on her own and pursued college academic work knowing very well that she could handle it. Lori was taking charge of her future. "I had to come in with a plan. I don't have time to waste. I thought because I'm older and I've taken such a big break from school, so I needed to know what I was going to do coming in" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). Lori narrowed down her majors to two choices, nursing or dental hygiene. She made a list of pros and cons for each major to help with her decision. On one hand, both professions were in healthcare and she would get to help people. On the other hand, to become a nurse, she would need two years of hospital experience which meant that she would have to volunteer for two years while still taking classes. Then, even with volunteer experience, Lori would still have to compete with seasoned nurses to get the coveted jobs with decent work hours. As a mother of two young children, she cringed at the thought of having to work the graveyard shift.

> [T]here's all other nurses cause there's so many programs that offer nursing. You got [Fern University] or you know, there's all these schools. And there's people that move here from the mainland that have theirs and they just take the state boards and "oh, I'm a nurse in this state now." So [you're] competing with someone that has 15 years experience and you just graduated. Of course, they're going to hire someone else. So I decided not to be a nurse. I thought about all that stuff. And you're always dealing with

sick people for the most part and the emotional baggage. So that was my deciding factor.

I made a list and then dental hygiene won (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

The joy of choosing her own major was knowing that she was in control of her own destiny. Lori wanted to make sure that she did not live a life that resembled her mother's life.

> I understand the ramifications of not having an education especially, I'm not trying to say men or female, but I'm not a strong man where I can go and become a journeymen or become a carpenter. I have to rely on my intellect, with whatever I can attain through school. So that's my only means to become financially stable right? Now that everyone needs a college degree, you can't work up throughout the ranks, it's not how it is nowadays. And to be financially stable means I don't have to be my mother. I know that might sound so horrible . . . But she worked so hard and she was so tired and burnt out. I don't want to be that person (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Lori decided that her best bet was to get a college degree in STEMS and to take advantage of the opportunities that accompanied a college degree.

Relatedness. At SCC, Lori developed an information network of peers, instructors, staff, and administrators. Among her peers, she liked having to deal with fewer cliques and less juvenile behavior. She said that it was easier to make friends in college because they all shared the common goal of getting a college degree. Still, Lori admitted that making friends did not come automatically; people had to be open-minded and engaged with others in order to foster the relationship. The only peers who irritated Lori were group members who refused to do their share of the work. Time and time again, Lori has had to do more than her share or tackle the entire assignment by herself in order to get a good grade. She realized that there was no sense in

getting angry and lashing out at the shirkers since this only resulted in their refusal to do any work at all.

What also helped satisfy Lori's need for relatedness at SCC was her part-time job on campus. Lori's job as a student assistant for the Pathway to Success Project required her to know about the various resources on campus from tutoring to getting scholarships. Her main role was to connect Native Hawaiian students to these resources and eliminate any obstacles that may prevent them from completing their degrees. Lori personally utilized some of the services she learned about such as psychology services, writing center, math lab, counseling and advising, and Job Prep Services. Besides working on campus, Lori was also an active volunteer. Until the Hawaiian club disbanded, she was highly involved in community services. When I met her, she was still volunteering on campus by helping the Job Prep Services with their orientation.

In class, Lori connected with about 80% of her instructors. Lori liked when faculty members shared information about themselves because it made them more personable and human. She mentioned how there were some instructors who did not even know their students' names. "Because there's professors that don't even care, they just lecture the whole entire time" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). Lori believed it was a shame that these instructors did not take the time to connect with the students. As for the counselors on campus, Lori thought that they went above and beyond what was required of them. They seem to really care about the students.

Integrated regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. In Lori's case, she had total freedom to pursue whatever interested her without interference from her parents or other family members. It was not to say that Lori came from an autonomy supportive home environment

where there was encouragement to explore her options, constant support, and positive feedback. It was quite the opposite.

When Lori finally qualified for financial aid, she returned to college because she believed that earning a degree was worth her time. She internalized the value of a college degree into her own set of values and beliefs. Notably, she did not attend school just for the love of learning; she was there to get a degree in a field that would enable her to become financially stable in the future. It was an integrated regulation.

Lori also had an integrated regulation to pursue dental hygiene. Thus, she showed great interest in working toward a bachelor's degree in this field. She said that her interest in becoming a dental hygienist came about because dental care was such a luxury when she was growing up. She remembered how her mother took her to see a dentist only five times as a child. When she turned 17, she could not wait to visit a dentist to address her problems with plaque and cavities, and to get braces. She spent much time at the dental office and got interested in the possibility of becoming a dental hygienist. When she becomes a hygienist, she looks forward to building a rapport with her patients so that they feel comfortable at the dentist's office.

At SCC, the majority of faculty members have provided Lori with an autonomy supportive learning environment that encouraged her to reach her academic goals. Interestingly enough, Lori appreciated instructors who controlled their learning environment to some extent. In other words, she liked when they had guidelines and standards. She appreciated when they were organized and thorough, but at the same time, open-minded and flexible enough to accommodate students' needs. Lori liked the instructors who took the time to post their syllabi, rubrics, standards, assignments, and readings at least one week before the semester started, and those who told their students what to prepare for the next class and when the assignments were

due. These instructors were creating a supportive environment because they equipped the students with enough structure and information to succeed.

Conversely, Lori had her share of instructors who gave no clear guidelines or criteria to follow. Although this could be interpreted as giving students the opportunity to explore and grow at their own pace, Lori saw it as uncaring and unstructured. Lori said that ineffective instructors were the ones who constantly changed their syllabi, failed to respond to students' emails and phone calls, and showed no remorse when they emailed assignments or readings one day before class. Lori recalled instructors who left signs on the classroom door stating that class was cancelled at the last minute. Then, these same instructors had the audacity to mark points off from assignments that were not emailed or delivered to their office by the end of that day. Lori said that the bottom line was that unorganized instructors set students up for failure.

In conclusion, as a student at SCC, Lori's three innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness were being met. For that reason, her motivation to attend college and go into dental hygiene was best described as an integrated regulation where she exhibited high levels of engagement, psychological well-being, conceptual understanding of the material, and persistence.

Expectancy-Value Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Expectancy. In Lori's case, she believed that doing her assignments and preparing for the exams would lead to high grades, which in turn would get her into the dental hygiene program at GU. Her outcome efficacy did not differ from her efficacy expectancy; in other words, she believed that she personally had the ability to execute the behavior necessary to achieve this expected outcome. Granted that people often based their expectations on their

performance in comparison to other people's performance, Lori's expectancy to succeed at her academic goals was based on how well she did in comparison to her peers.

> I mean some classes, I think I do better than some of my classmates because maybe they're different levels then I am so maybe when they taking a course is they know like what's expected of them. Maybe because I've been in school and I'm older so I, I just have a different like standard, I know what, I've had enough classes to know what professors are looking for (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

When I met Lori in Spring 2016, she had already applied and interviewed for the dental hygiene program at GU and was waiting for their decision. Lori planned her course load so that she could begin the dental hygiene program in Fall 2016. She knew how competitive it would be since GU was the only college that offerred a dental hygiene program on the island. In order to offset her dismal transcripts from DCC and CCC, Lori improved her chances of getting in by volunteering for community service, participating in students activities, job shadowing at several dental offices, and earning straight As at SCC. Furthermore, she developed close relationships with her instructors, counselors, and supervisors so that they would write strong letters of recommendation; and she utilized the Job Prep Services on campus to perfect her resume and improve her interviewing skills. Lori knew it was all about being one step ahead of her competition.

If she were accepted into the dental hygiene program, then Lori would be able to earn her bachelor's degree in two and a half to three years. She understood the sacrifice it would take to successfully complete the program. For example, Lori heard that dental hygiene students spent 12-14 hour days at GU. They began at about 6:30 a.m. and finished their last class at 8:30 p.m. Lori expected family members to pitch in to do their part to help out with the children while she

was in school. "Yep, everyone just got to chip in. It's a sacrifice" (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Getting a college degree had always been her plan. There were no alternative plans. Even when she dropped out of college and was working full time, her plan was always to return to college and earn a degree. The degree itself was not the reward, it was only a means to becoming a dental hygienist. Lori's ultimate expectation was to become financially successful.

High self-efficacy. Lori had all of the attributes of someone with high self-efficacy when it came to completing her degree at SCC. Based on past personal history, Lori believed that she had the skills and cognitive ability to accomplish her goals. Whenever she encountered setbacks such as being placed into developmental math, she focused her effort on mastering the challenge and persevering long enough to attain her goal. In this case, she sought the necessary help and worked hard at learning the math concepts so that she could move up to the next level. Lori was no stranger to persevering. When she was a senior in high school, she persevered through a year of social isolation while earning a 4.0 GPA. At SCC, she continued to persevere as a full-time student. She maintained a 4.0 GPA all while working part-time on campus; volunteering; job-shadowing; cooking for a family of four; cleaning the house; doing the laundry; taking her older child to baseball practice, choir, and judo; and helping both children with their homework.

It was no surprise that Lori felt the stress of being a college student, worker, mother, and girlfriend. She looked for healthy ways to manage her stress level. The worst was when her anxiety got the best of her during exams. She recalled times during an exam when she felt sweaty, clammy, and itchy; there were even times when she blanked out.

> Oh so, this is happened to me a couple of times where I'm so stressed out that, I know like I took the time to study, not like I just crammed. But when I have the exam in front

> of me I totally blanked out. And I can't remember it. So like this happened to me a couple times cause I so, I put so much stress upon myself to do well and I just blank out (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Since her last episode, she began taking the time to hone her skills in managing her anxiety through breathing, stretching, preparation, and test-taking strategies. For example, she brought earplugs when she went to the testing center to block out the noise: "[I]f it's really crowded, there's so many people, because they're nervous, doing all these different noises, and it throws me off my concentration" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). Lori also utilized the testing strategy of skipping difficult questions and returning to them later: "But the first time it happened to me, I just like blanked, and I spent so much time on that one question that I didn't do so well" (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori admitted that the most difficult times to manage her test anxiety was when she was restricted in an imposed environment. One of those times was when she was taking an exam at the testing center for her online anatomy class. She was well prepared for the exam to the point where she could label all of the bones and knew how they were linked. Nevertheless, on the day of her test, she asked the proctor for some scratch paper and a pen or pencil but was told that it was not allowed during the exam.

> And because of that I had a hard time to draw, I couldn't draw up things, I couldn't even like make a little note so I could come back to it. So it didn't set me up for success. And I, I mean I didn't fail, but I didn't do as well as I maybe could have if I had a piece of paper and pencil (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori was so upset about the testing conditions that she sent the instructor an email after the exam to question his rules. He replied that that was his policy and it was not going to

change. Lori concluded that this setback was beyond her control; it was illogical and there was nothing she could do about it.

Low self-efficacy. For the most part, Lori did not have low self-efficacy when it came to academics. However, there was a moment when Lori experienced low-self efficacy about going into medicine. It was when she took an accelerated zoology course in the summer at DCC. Basically, the instructor expected students to memorize all of the bones, 800 muscles, and all of the nerves in the body. Lori did her best to keep up by attending the lectures, taking notes, and making flashcards. Grades were based solely on exams. When Lori realized that she was going to get a C, she began to doubt whether she was smart enough to be in the medical field.

> [I]f I don't pass this, I don't get an A, I can't take any medical classes." So I thought if I can't do this class, I can't do any medical, I might have to, I really like, I felt really bad like I wanted to drop that class during the summer but I was like "huh, if I don't take this first part, if I don't even get a passing grade, I can't take the second part," and then I was like, "oh, then I can't even apply to dental hygiene" I need to finish these classes so I was like reassessing, and I was like "oh, am I not smart?" I doubted myself for not being smart enough, not being able to retain all this information. It really tried my inners, like my, it made me think if I, this was what I was cut out to do anything in the medical field. But I just sucked it up and finished the both of the classes in parts and then I retook the other one over the regular semester cause I had time. But yeah, it made me like question, (heavy sigh) I did all of this and I can't even do this class (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori recovered from her bout with low self-efficacy after she got an A for her second zoology course.

Incentives and values. In Lori's case, there seems to be a positive relationship between expectancy and value when it came to earning a college degree. Lori pressed on towards her expectation to graduate from SCC because it was an important endeavor that would bring about feelings of achievement, power, satisfaction, and belonging. It was not an easy task to complete her prerequisites in 1.5 years and maintain a perfect GPA at SCC, but she proved to herself and to others that she was able to do it.

As for Lori's decision to go into dental hygiene, it was more of an inverse linear function than a positive relationship between expectancy and value. On one hand, Lori expected to succeed in a field she valued but on the other hand, there were signs that indicated that she found dental hygiene valuable and appealing because it was highly selective and the probability of success was low. Of the hundreds who applied, only 30 were interviewed and 15 were selected to participate. Lori was proud to be one of the 30 students who got interviewed. It was still to be determined if she would be one of the 15 who actually made it into the program. Nevertheless, if she did get in, then she would be part of a selective group of students.

Cost value. When Lori was 17 years old, the opportunity cost of going to college was too great. Even though Lori wanted to go to college at that time, she was unable to make it a priority.

> I needed to have a roof and food so I had to work so even though I paid for [college] . . . I had to pay for my rent or whatevers so. Like I had to prioritize and school wasn't the, didn't become a priority (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

By the time Lori returned to college when she was 24 years old, she was ready to sacrifice her time, even the time she spent with her children. There were numerous occasions when she had to tell her older child, "I can't go to your game because I have a paper to write"

(personal communication, March 14, 2016), and times when she had to study on holidays while her family went out. Lori wanted her children to know that she was doing this so that they could have a better future.

> So it makes me sad, but I know I'm doing it for [my daughter], but it's just, ho, it just eats me up inside cause I do want to but like I gotta get this done too so, and just her tone of voice makes me sad, "oh I gotta do homework again." Yeah, so, sometimes it's hard, she'll just jump all over me, or pull on this, because she wants my attention, so then I have to wait for her to go to sleep and yeah. It's a constant struggle but it has to be a balance or you just, you won't be able to do your homework (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori was fortunate to have a boyfriend who was supportive of her academic goals. It was not to say that he did not feel frustrated at times when dinner was not cooked or when Lori was headed out to volunteer at yet another community service event. However, for the most part, it seems as though he understood the sacrifices he had to make so that Lori could focus on school and get into the dental hygiene program.

Attainment value. Not only was it important for Lori to earn good grades at SCC in order to get into the dental hygiene program; it was equally important for her to earn good grades so that she could outwardly demonstrate how competent she perceived herself to be especially since she was placed on academic probation at two other community colleges. Not only did she want to reassure herself, but she also wanted others to know that it was her situation in 2005-2006 that caused her to drop out of college, not her lack of competency or intelligence.

Intrinsic value. Lori's intrinsic value was to engage and help others. Thus, all of the fields (e.g., psychologist, counseling, surgeon, nursing, radiologist, dental hygienist) she

considered as careers were centered around this value. She said that in an age when we rely on technology, we tend to disengage with one another. So she wanted to make a conscientious effort to remain connected. "I think just that fundamental value just building human relationships is instrumental not only work, like professional settings, just regular setting throughout the community. That having that mindset, I just be mindful of people" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). It may be one of the reasons why she felt satisfaction when working with the Native Hawaiian students in the Pathway to Success Project.

Her intrinsic value also explained why Lori got irritated when some of the instructors at SCC did not know the students' names. These instructors communicated that they did not care about the students.

> Yeah, so some professors, they let it be known where they are the professor and it's a very big like power distance. Like I am the instructor, I'm the doctor or whatever and you're the student. You know you are learning from me so it makes it very tense or not comfortable cause you always feel as if there's this big power distance and they're so much higher than you that it makes you, it made me uncomfortable (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Utility value. Lori took her fair share of classes that were not particularly interesting but necessary to achieve her long-term goal of getting into the dental hygiene program. One of them was pharmacology, which was a combination of anatomy and chemistry. Lori was not interested in memorizing the composition of each drug; knowing the reaction of taking a mixture of drugs; or knowing the generic names, trade names, and dosage requirements. She complained, "I'm not a nurse, I'm not a doctor, I'm not a pharmacist but it's a required course for dental hygiene"

(personal communication, February 22, 2016). Despite her critique of the course requirement, she persisted because it was a means to an end.

> I had to get an A because I won't get into my program. So I had ulterior motives. So like for me, it was the underlying of the end picture so even if I wasn't interested, I know I have to do really well or I won't be a candidate for my the school I want to go into (personal communication, February 22, 2106).

Another example of utility value was when Lori conscientiously established relationships with her instructors on campus so that they could write stellar letters of recommendations for her.

> Sometimes I just talk to them after the class or before class. I just kind of talk to them to make sure, I, that everything is okay or I try to keep a good rapport with all my professors cause, uhm, I like to ask them for letters of recommendation (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Those letters of recommendation were essential to getting scholarships and grants to pay for her associate's degrees at SCC. She hoped to continue to pay for her bachelor's degree with scholarships and grants specifically set aside for Native Hawaiian students. If at all possible, she wanted to avoid taking out any school loans. Besides building up a network of recommenders, it was also vital that she volunteered for community service, got involved in student activities on campus, and became an active member in associations such as Phi Theta Kappa so that she could qualify for the more competitive scholarships.

Motive. Lori strived to achieve success. She did not shy away from situations connected with failure and shame. It was the reason why she returned to college after dropping out twice before. It was also evident in the way she progressed from one task of intermediate difficulty to the next. According to Atkinson (1957), people with the motive to achieve success will engage

in intermediate difficult tasks; they get no satisfaction out of tasks that will definitely result in failure or tasks that are too easy and achievable by all. However, this was not true for Lori. The surprising fact was that Lori wanted to take courses where she had a high probability of success at the expense of not learning anything new. That was because her main goal was to maintain a flawless GPA. "If it had no correlation with my GPA, and no connection, I would not be penalized, I would do the [course] that's really hard where I learn a lot of stuff" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). Hence, the reason for her wanting to take easy classes was not because she was trying to avoid failure, pain, shame and humiliation, but because the dental hygiene program was so competitive that she needed a perfect GPA to be considered. In her case, it was even more important to earn straight As because she had to compensate for her poor transcripts from DCC and CCC.

In conclusion, the Expectancy-Value Theory pointed out that Lori was motivated to persist in college because of her expectation to become a dental hygiene in the future. She was highly motivated to achieve success in a field where the task was difficult and the probability of success was low.

Attribution Theory as a Basis for Analysis

According to the attribution theory (Weiner, 1986), motivation was influenced by the individuals' affective reaction to a previous experience as well as their perception of what caused the outcome in those prior experiences. The way Lori was treated by other students at WHS in her senior year was an example of negative outcome. She had a history of going to new schools from the time she was in elementary school and had always been successful at making new friends. "I switched through to many schools that I was already a pro when I became a senior" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). Yet, the students at WHS were unusually

cliquish. They made her feel like she did not belong. It got to the point where no one would eat lunch with her in the cafeteria, which was especially embarrassing for a teenager. Lori attributed her failure to a social norm. She said, as "you get older I think it [is] harder to get, make friends because everyone establish[es] their friend base from early on" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). It was not known why the other students at this particular school did not like her. In any case, Lori perceived that the locus of control was external for she had no control over the way other students treated her at WHS. At the same time, she considered it to be a controllable attribute because the other students had control over how they reacted to her. As long as Lori remained at that school, her classmates were unlikely to change. It was a stable factor. Lori summed it up: "the student body, when I went to school really sucked" (personal communication, February 22, 2016). This was the closest that Lori got to feeling a sense of learned helplessness; that is, her active response to the situation could not change the outcome. Thankfully, Lori's high school counselor stepped in and befriended Lori.

> She [the counselor] would hear me out every time I had a hard time. She just let me eat in her office. I didn't want to have to eat by myself. And like when I stopped coming to classes, she would call me and make sure that I'm okay. She took the extra initiative. So if it wasn't for her I probably just would have got my GED (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Lori attributed the attainment of her high school diploma to this one counselor and to some faculty members who also went out of their way to make Lori feel comfortable. In this example of positive outcome, the locus of control was external to Lori, but stable and controllable. What touched Lori the most was knowing that these faculty and staff members

were not obliged to go out of their way to be warm and accepting, but they chose to do so anyway.

By the time she graduated from WHS, Lori was already living separately from her mother, affording herself financially, and taking classes at DCC. Yet, she was not considered an emancipated minor by the Hawai‘i courts. According to guidelines established by the U.S. DOE, students are dependents if they are younger than 24 years old unless declared an emancipated minor by a Hawai‘i court; in other words, Lori living on her own did not constitute the status of an independent student. If she wanted to apply for financial aid before she was 24 years old, then she had to submit her mother's federal income tax return. Of course, Lori's mother refused to comply with this request. It was an external stable attribute out of Lori's control. Not wanting to fall behind, Lori decided to pay for college using the money she made from her multiple jobs. This unsustainable situation eventually led to the unexpected negative outcome of Lori dropping out of college.

> So I ended up on academic probation and I tried to go to another campus thinking, oh I'll turn a new leaf but then I get academic probation from there. So I end up just dropping out and I was just like you know what, this isn't for me and I just focused on work (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori attributed her failure at DCC and CCC to a lack of effort and external factors beyond her control. It had nothing to do with her abilities and skills. For this reason, Lori saw her situation as unstable. It would eventually change when she turned 24 and could qualify for financial aid on her own. She also realized that her grades from one community college did not transfer to another community college; therefore, just because she was on academic probation at

one school did not mean she could not start fresh at a different community college. Lori was still hopeful.

Then she found out that even though her grades did not transfer to the other community colleges, the grades she earned at the first two community colleges remained on her transcript. Thus, when she applied to the dental hygiene program at GU, her grades from DCC, CCC, and SCC were all included in her transcript. This was an unexpected negative outcome. She blamed her lack of knowledge about this matter on the faculty and staff. They failed to warn her that earning an F could never be wiped off her records. Furthermore, no one mentioned that there were alternatives, such as withdrawing from a class or getting an incomplete.

> When I took classes when I was younger. When I was 17 or 18, I took a couple courses there. But no one told me that you have to drop the class. I just took classes and stopped going because no one told me. But those grades haunt you for the rest of your life. I wished someone told me that (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

In spite of her past history of failures at DCC and CCC, Lori did exceptionally well at SCC. Her 4.0 GPA was a positive outcome. This was probably not a surprise for Lori since she had a past personal history of earning good grades in high school. She attributed her locus of causality for success to internal, unstable, controllable factors such as effort, time management, managing test anxiety, becoming socially engaged, and utilizing appropriate learning strategies. One of the most important things she learned to do was to keep a tight reign on her schedule.

> It goes from week from week to day to day. So I keep a very detailed calendar. I color code it and I look what week offers, what I have to do and then from there I just go from what is due to all these different parameters and then I try figure it out and plan it for that week. So I look a week ahead and I kind of plan it out. And I just have to be really

highly organized or like if not, then chaos happens. Cause I have so much things I got to do (personal communication, February 22, 2016).

As an academically seasoned students, she was also cognizant about learning which strategies were most effective for a particular task.

I have different strategies depending on what I need to learn. Sometimes I like to visually draw things out, sometimes I gotta type things out, make an outline, sometimes I got to make flashcards . . . Sometimes like if I don't understand what the professors' saying because they are not explaining it to me like I can comprehend what their, the concept, I have to go like to YouTube something just to find like another visual aid (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori was referring to Khan Academy available online. The website helped her to better understand various topics which were unclear in class. Lori also utilized BrainFuse, an academic online tool, when she needed help with her writing.

There was an unusual example of a positive outcome that occurred right after a negative outcome. As I previously mentioned, Lori took a zoology course in the first summer session and unexpectedly earned a C. She was devastated. Then, in the second summer session, she took the second zoology course and earned an A. She was ecstatic. Interestingly, when she reflected about her experience, she demonstrated hedonic bias. On one hand, she blamed the first zoology instructor for her bad grade. She said that she got a C in his class because he based the students' grades solely on exams and expected them to memorize too many things in a short amount of time. On the other hand, because her first zoology instructor made her memorize essential information about the subject matter, she did not have to study very hard to pass the second zoology class.

> I didn't even have to study for that [second] class so I [felt] really good about myself because I studied really well for those other classes so when I took an even harder class, and it was accelerated, it was summer, I didn't have to [study hard]. I could just relax, and it was it was so nice. It was such a big reward (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

She attributed her success in the second zoology class to her own efforts when in reality it was likely at least in part, due to her first instructor pushing her to memorize the essential contents of the subject matter.

In conclusion, Lori experienced a combination of positive outcomes and negative outcomes that influenced her motivation to persist in college. Lori perceived that several of the negative unexpected outcomes (i.e., social isolation at WHS, academic probation at DCC and CCC) were a result of external, unstable causes. They were not her fault and the outcomes could be changed if the situation were to change. As for the three positive outcomes (i.e., graduating from WHS with 4.0, maintaining a 4.0 GPA at SCC, getting an A in the second zoology course), Lori attributed them to a combination of attributes with a heavy emphasis on internal, controllable causalities. For that reason, based on the attribution theory, it seems as though Lori would continue to exert effort, remain active, and persist in her classes until she graduated from SCC and GU.

Self-Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Dweck (1975) stated that the kind of praises people received in the past would determine whether they believe that intelligence was fixed or malleable. Those who are constantly exposed to intelligence praises and trait praises tended to believe that intelligence and abilities were permanent; whereas those who were exposed to effort praises and strategy praises tended to

believe that intelligence and abilities were in a constant state of development. The individual's mindset affected future performance, effort, and reaction to setbacks and failures. Of course having a fixed-mindset or a growth-mindset was not a dichotomy; that is, people could have a combination of both mindsets.

Lori said, "I don't really get praises from my parents. My mom's just like, I don't get anything" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). The closest feedback Lori ever got to a praise was when her mother said, "you work hard . . . you look tired" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). Lori wondered if this how local Asian parents typically praised their children. When Lori told me that she did not get any feedback from her mother, I questioned what Dweck would have said about those who do not receive feedback from their parents about schoolwork. Were they less likely to develop a fixed-mindset than those who received intelligence praises or trait praises? On the other hand, it was highly improbable that Lori did not receive any feedback from her mother in other areas of her life. Dweck (2006) stated, "Parents start interpreting and reacting to their child's behavior at minute one" (p. 189). So when Lori said that she did not get any feedback from her mother about school, it was likely that she generalized feedback she received about other areas of her life to schooling.

In contrast to her mother's lack of feedback in academics, Lori's instructors at SCC praised her for the amount of effort she put into her schoolwork. For example, one instructor sent her an email congratulating her for getting an A on an assignment. Other instructors repeatedly told her that she did a good job on various projects and presentations. Starved for feedback, Lori never got tired of the small notes that instructors wrote on her papers. "Makes you feel good, I think yeah. Makes you feel like they know who I am or it makes you feel like, they actually recognize that I'm doing well" (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

During the second interview, I asked Lori directly what she thought about intelligence and ability being fixed or changeable throughout one's lifetime, she answered:

> [S]ome people are given, like they are just genetically . . . their mothers and fathers were scientists and whatever but if it doesn't ever like being nurtured or grown upon, they can't develop to their full capacity, like full capabilities. But it doesn't mean a person that doesn't have the best genes can't develop into the smartest person alive. So I think it's a combination of the two. So I don't know, I think people are maybe genetically predisposed to having good genes but if it's not like, like you don't go to like the right kind of schools or have that kind of engagement, it's not gonna develop. But it doesn't say that someone that has just regular common genes can't be the smartest person through like education. And their own like will to want to be the smartest person or whatever (personal communication, March 14, 2016).

Lori believed that intelligence was not fixed but could be changed throughout one's lifetime; thus, she had a growth-mindset. To Lori, it was not a question of whether intelligence was a result of nature or nurture; rather, it was a question of whether individuals were stuck with the same amount of intelligence they were born with or if individuals could develop their intelligence throughout their lifetime through education and other life experiences.

Lori elaborated on her view by sharing with me a study about identical twins separated at birth. One twin was adopted by a well-to-do family, went to good schools, and did well in life; whereas, the other twin went to live with a median income family, went to average schools and ended up working a regular job. Her point was that people were born with genetic endowments but that intelligence was malleable and was constantly developing based on the amount of support people received in their environment.

Her verbal answer supported her actions. It explained why at 24 years old she decided to return to a community college. Throughout her time at SCC, she made every effort to learn new and challenging things up until her final semester. With a growth-mindset, Lori saw past failures as an indication that she needed to put in more effort the next time around. In one instance, Lori explained how she went back to DCC over the summer to take eight credits just to bring her GPA back up to over 2.0. Someone with a fixed-mindset would not do that since failing once meant they would most likely fail again.

There was one subject that Lori has always done well in -- English. She even took AP English in her senior year at WHS. When she enrolled in an upper English course at SCC, she was challenged to meet the demands of the instructor. She did so by seeking help at the writing center. That was when she hit a snag. She explained how the tutors at the writing center were only required to have completed English 100, but Lori was looking for someone to help her with English 250. She specifically asked the tutors to help her to write concise thesis statements, topic sentences and conclusions. "And they couldn't even help me every, like four different people. They looked at me like, really" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). Lori did not give up. Then on her fifth try she finally found a tutor who could help her. Meanwhile, Lori searched for other possible resources and found BrainFuse. Lori's push to improve her writing skills was yet another example of Lori having a growth minded; she was committed to mastering greater challenges and overcoming setbacks.

Nevertheless, there were also signs of Lori having a somewhat fixed-mindset. One of the characteristics of Lori having a fixed-mindset was how she placed a lot of pressure on herself to succeed so that she could maintain her label of success. She did this when she aimed for perfect scores on all of her assignments. Moreover, she was never satisfied with her accomplishments;

she described herself as an overachiever. With an urgency to prove herself in every class, Lori averaged three hours of sleep a night. Lori said that she would rather take a course where she had a 90% chance of getting a good grade at the expense of learning anything new rather than take a course where she learned many new things but only had a 10% chance of getting a good grade. However, what she did in actuality contradicted what she said. In her final semester, she took two writing intensive courses because she wanted to challenge herself.

I questioned if her obsession with grades was due to having a fixed-mindset or was it caused by her need to be a competitive applicant for the dental hygiene program. Fixed-mindset individuals believe that intelligence is permanent throughout their lifetime and that each and every performance is a reflection of their intelligence (Dweck, 1975). Since one's level of intelligence was set; that is, intelligence did not change, then those who were smart were always smart and would always do well. Hence, smart students succeeded each and every time they performed. At any time students failed, then it was an indication that they were probably not smart. For that reason, those with a fixed mindset try to avoid any courses that are too risky or too challenging where the possibility for failure is high.

In Lori's case, she already failed at college twice; yet, she did not shy away from going back to college or from taking challenging courses. In her mind, failure did not equate to incompetency or a fixed amount of intelligence. Based on what Lori shared, Lori's need to get perfect grades was due something else. It seems to be caused by the competition of getting into a dental hygiene program. Since Lori had her heart set on becoming a dental hygienist, she had no other choice but to be a perfectionist when it came to academics. "I knew I couldn't do average because I wouldn't get into the dental hygiene" (personal communication, March 14, 2016). In this case, the standard of admission supported a fixed-mindset where students did not have the

luxury of becoming or developing along the way; in every instance, they had to prove that they had mastered the material by earning an A.

In conclusion, at first glance, it seems like Lori had a combination of a growth-mindset and a fixed-mindset; however at closer look, her perfectionist attitude about grades was due to her need to be a competitive applicant for the dental hygiene program. Thus, it can be said that Lori leaned toward having a growth-mindset.

Closing Comments

As with other interviews, I asked Lori why she thought students dropped out of college. What was special about her answer was that she had first-hand experience as an assistant to the Academic Advisor for Native Hawaiian students in CTE and STEMS. She explained how she saw some students drop out because they had other life issues that forced them to juggle many obligations. For these students, school could not be their priority. Lori understood their dilemma. She knew how making ends took precedent over finishing college. She also saw other students drop out because they were not prepared for college. Then there were those who did not have the motivation to get through college.

What recently caught Lori's attention was the push to make students take 15 credits so that they could graduate on time. Lori said that this was only possible if the students were diligent, motivated, had the right skills, practiced good time management, and knew what they wanted to major in. It did not work for poorly prepared students who were struggling to juggle 15 credits in college. These students usually ended up failing several classes. The consequences included giving up their scholarships and financial aid because their GPA failed to meet the academic requirements.

Regardless of the students' reasons for dropping out, Lori wanted them to know that they could always return or register for classes at another college. She thought that students should know that instead of getting a F, there were other options such as withdrawing from a class or getting no credit for the class.

As for Lori, she persisted to graduate from a community college with a 4.0 GPA because she knew that she could not otherwise become financially successful in the state of Hawai'i without majoring in a lucrative field in college.

Findings and Analysis for Eleanor

Tinto's Conceptual Schema as a Basis for Analysis

According to Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema, Eleanor's persistence in college was determined by her pre-entry attributes, as well as her integration into the academic and social systems at the particular college.

Family background. One of the pre-entry attributes to consider was the student's family background. Eleanor was born and raised in a middle class, traditional Catholic family. She was the youngest of three. Her maternal half-Ukrainian grandfather was stern, not very affectionate, but a successful investor who was great at working with numbers. Eleanor's mother followed in her father's footsteps and became a successful self-employed businesswoman. She, too, worked long non-conventional hours. In contrast, Eleanor's father worked at a military base. His routine schedule allowed him to come home at the same time everyday. She described her father as a quiet part Native Hawaiian local man and her mother as a talkative Samoan-Caucasian woman originally from California. Her parents were married for over 40 years. Eleanor fondly remembered how different the family parties were when she was growing up. "So family parties at my dad's house, my dad's family was you know, fried noodles and teriyaki chicken. From my

mom it was like grape and cheese and wine and salami. Yeah, so really different but fun" (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Eleanor had a good relationship with both of her parents. She described their parenting style as tough love. Her father was not very expressive, but she knew that he really loved her and was proud of her. As for her mother, she had played a key role in teaching Eleanor how to be an independent, reliable, and respectable person. She made it a point to teach Eleanor good work ethics. Eleanor's parents were wealthy enough to send her to private schools but they never pushed her to go to college. When Eleanor decided for herself that she wanted to go to college, her parents enthusiastically supported her decision.

Precollege schooling. Another pre-entry attribute to examine was the student's precollege schooling. Eleanor attended a private Catholic school until her senior year when the school shut down due to financial problems. After the school closed, Eleanor went to a private Adventist school. Eleanor explained why.

> I like the small environment. I thought you got more personal attention. At that time in my life, I was kind of really set on going to college and stuff so it was where I could really focus academically as opposed to a bigger public school (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Unfortunately, the Adventist school may not have been the best fit for Eleanor, since she felt uneasy about the way Seventh Day Adventists did things in comparison to the Catholics. She graduated from high school in 2002.

While Eleanor was still at the Catholic school, she met her favorite teacher, Mr. Jacobs. He was her history teacher, as well as her speech and debate, and mock trial coach. Like Eleanor, he was born and raised on the neighbor island and attended private school. He went to

the mainland to attend college and later returned to the neighbor island to teach. His challenge was to get his students to "broaden [their] horizons a bit coming from a small island . . . [They] tend to get a small mind mentality sometimes, so he pushed [his students] to step out of [their] comfort zone" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). There was one specific moment with Mr. Jacobs that stuck with Eleanor after all of these years. She remembered how he taught her about the importance of resources. It happened when she was traveling with her speech and debate team to O'ahu for a state competition. At the event, she came across students from other private schools and was astonished at how well prepared they were for the competition.

> And I was like, "Wow, you guys are so well coached and so well educated." And my teacher, he said, "[Eleanor], you gotta remember that they have different resources than you guys do. You know, they have access to the best education." And I was like, "wow." I told [Mr. Jacobs], "What do you mean by that?" You know and he was like, "Do you think all of them are really, really that smart or do you think a lot of it is that they have been coached and trained, you know exposed so much their whole lives that that's how they learned, it's grown with them." And I was, I don't know, it just, it's always made me think differently ever since then (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Mr. Jacobs taught her that it took resources to access quality education and that one's quality of education played a role in how equipped a person was to handle academic challenges.

Individual attributes. The third pre-entry attribute said to influence a college student's initial commitment was individual attributes. Eleanor described herself as organized, determined, focused, dependable, respectful, sociable, friendly, and a little anal. She was raised to avoid being pushy or rude. As a student, she was confident about grasping new knowledge and believed in pushing herself out of her comfort zone and keeping an open mind. She knew

that although she could not control what others did and the roles they played in her life, she could control how she reacted to them and the situation.

Initial commitment to college. Eleanor's favorable pre-entry attributes pointed to Eleanor being initially committed to the goal of college completion at PCC. She came from a loving and supportive family, attended two college-prep schools, and had the attributes to be successful in college. It was important to note that this was her second time in college. That is to say that her pre-entry attributes were the same as they were the first time she went to college and dropped out. Hence, if she were to attain her degree or transfer to a four-year institution this time around, it would probably not be a result of her pre-entry attributes.

Academic integration. Eleanor entered PCC in Spring 2015 and was able to maintain a 3.87 cumulative GPA. In her first semester at PCC, she took 12 credits and got straight As. Eleanor was only required to take one developmental math course. The last time she took a math class was about 13 years ago so it was not a surprise that she needed a refresher course. Without a doubt, Eleanor met PCC's standards of grade and intellectual development.

Social integration. Initially when Eleanor entered PCC, she did not feel welcomed. Eleanor was assigned to a counselor who refused to allow her to register for more than one class. The problem was that the counselor flagged Eleanor as a high-risk student because she had a past history of dropping out of college.

Fortunately for Eleanor, not all of the people at PCC were as judgmental and unwelcoming as the counselor. Eleanor quickly formed relationships with a number of faculty members and classmates during her first semester. In brief, despite Eleanor's initial experience with the counselor, she perceived a social congruence between herself and the collective social climate of PCC.

Modified commitment to college. When Eleanor began taking classes at PCC, it was questionable whether Eleanor would stay because of the reception she received from her counselor; however, as she became more socially integrated and remained academically integrated, her modified commitment to the goal of degree completion at that school grew steadily.

In conclusion, based on Eleanor's pre-entry attributes, academic integration, and social integration, she seems to be committed to the goal of college completion at PCC. If she succeeded at achieving her academic goals this time around, then it was most likely because she was able to successfully integrate into the academic system and social system at PCC.

Maslow's Hierarchy as a Basis for Analysis

According to Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, Eleanor's drive to remain in college depended on whether her lower needs were being met. If a lower need required attention, then Eleanor had to shift her attention away from the higher needs to address that particular lower need first.

Physiological needs and need for safety. As a child, Eleanor's physiological needs and need for safety were fulfilled in her secure and stable environment with two dependable, financially stable, loving parents who provided her with dependency, order and protection. Unfortunately, things changed when Eleanor got involved with the father of her two oldest children. She unexpectedly became a victim of domestic violence. Her need for safety suddenly required attention as she lived in fear and chaos. Eleanor lived in constant anxiety as her abuser repeatedly showed up at her workplace despite the restraining order she had against him.

> [I]t was hard because it's a public place so though I had a restraining order, they couldn't turn him away from being at the hospital, so it was just too much. I worked in radiology which is right next to the ER and he would find ways to be at the public place that they

> couldn't turn him away from every time, so it just got to be too much . . . I worked the night shift cause I went to school during the day so. Like I would come out from the hospital and go to my car and he'd be laying in the bed of my truck (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

He would also show up at Fern Community College (FCC) where Eleanor was enrolled. Eleanor explained how it was typical for the perpetrator to know the victim's "schedule down to a T, but I think that's kind of like how their personality is, yeah, they really study you so good" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Perhaps she thought that being in a public space with security guards would provide her with some safety since it was typically filled with students, instructors, staff members, administrators, and campus security.

> The way the campus is set up, there's a main parking lot on this side and then there's the campus here. In this parking lot, there were several occasions where my ex would come to the parking lot. And he would be waiting and there was some kind of altercations there . . . Yeah, not once did security ever pick up on it . . . I almost feel like, got to be little more aware that stuff like this is happening, so it got to the point where I just felt like I wasn't, I wasn't even safe going to school because no matter what, he would be there, and nobody would, you know. And I'm not saying it's someone else's responsibility to do anything but I almost felt like if I go there, it's a big place, I'm so vulnerable you know, because it's so big, he can really be anywhere (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

When I asked Eleanor whether other students intervened during the altercations, she replied, "people often see that as a like a personal problem, so they just kind of turned the cheek to it. That it's like, it's your issue, you deal with it" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Eleanor's last hope for intervention rested in the hands of the instructors. Despite knowing about Eleanor's dilemma, the instructors also did nothing.

> And I remember that, in that particular class, I would write about what was going on in my life, you know, about all the abuse that was happening and at that time, it wasn't often on yeah, often on relationship, trying to stay away and what ever. And not once did the teacher ever asked me about it (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Apparently, no one would or could protect Eleanor from her abuser. The only other option was to quit work, drop out of FCC in the middle of the semester, and leave the neighbor island immediately with her toddler and newborn.

> I just needed a way out. I had been through, two and a half years of police, the judiciary system, you name it, and they just couldn't keep me safe. It was the only way to safely leave the relationship. So I left (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Eleanor moved to the mainland, where she was the sole provider for her two young children. She had to make sure that their physiological needs and need for safety were being met. Although she still longed to earn a college degree, she had no time for school. She had to work full time to provide for her family.

When Eleanor felt that it was safe to return to the state of Hawai'i, she moved to O'ahu. When I met her, she was living with her new boyfriend and three children. She had full custody of her two eldest children and had no contact with her abuser other than in court. She reported that she finally felt safe. In comparison to the security guards at FCC, Eleanor believed that the guards at PCC would be more aggressive about keeping the students safe on campus.

> Whereas like here [at PCC], I feel like every little break-in whatever they update the whole entire campus. They let us all know, you know the parking lot had this something.

I don't know if they, I don't know I felt like if something were to happen here, attention would be brought to it (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Need for love and belonging. Early in life, Eleanor developed a sense of attachment, acceptance, and love with her parents and two older siblings. As a youth, Eleanor's need for belonging was also met by the teachers and her peers at the Catholic school. After Eleanor graduated from high school, she was a part of a cohort at the Nursing Academy at FCC. Ironically, she felt completely isolated from others in her cohort despite the fact that they were all in the same classes at the same time during the same semesters and they studied together. Although the intention of a cohort was to ensure that students felt a sense of belonging, acceptance, attachment, and perhaps even love, when Eleanor was dealing with her abuser, no one in her cohort bothered to inquire about her situation or offer to help her. "I felt like I was kind of just going through the whole situation alone. And I don't know, I felt like everyone, like it was really judgmental. Like I really didn't feel like I could talk to anybody" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Hence, her need for belonging was not being met by her peers at FCC. According to Eleanor, the problem with a cohort was that members were forced to work together. Students did not have the opportunity to choose who they wanted to work with in a group. In response to this lack of autonomy, students within a cohort broke up into little factions or cliques. Eleanor believed that it was better at PCC where she could take classes with different students, form her own study groups, and hang out with people she liked.

At one point, Eleanor ended up at the emergency room. There, she unexpectedly met a nurse who made a comment that Eleanor would never forget. The nurse told Eleanor, "I was once in your position and I left my, my ex-husband because he was really abusive . . . going to be hard, and going to be one long journey, but you can, you know you can do it" (personal

communication, March 1, 2016). This kind word of encouragement from a complete stranger inspired Eleanor to muster up the courage to escape from her abuser.

When I met Eleanor, her need for love and belonging was being met. Her parents supported her decision to return to college, and her current boyfriend was equally supportive.

Need for esteem. Whenever Eleanor's lower needs were partially met, she could focus on her need for esteem. For example, as a child, since Eleanor's lower needs were met, she could concentrate on her studies at the private school she attended. The one skill she struggled with in elementary school was her reading skills. For that reason, she advocated for a reading tutor. All of that tutoring must have paid off since Eleanor can now read in the 98th to 99th percentile. As a high school student, her need for esteem was met when she made honor roll, earned an A in college calculus, and was on the speech and debate, and mock trial team exploring the possibility of becoming an attorney. Then at the Nursing Academy at FCC, Eleanor proved her competency once again despite having to deal with an abusive partner.

> The work that I did, that I produced while I was actually physically there in school before, was really good work, I just didn't stick around long enough to complete it. But the quality of work that I did, despite whatever was going on was good (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Currently at PCC, Eleanor's need for esteem was being fulfilled as she continued to meet or exceed the instructors' expectations.

Eleanor kept her focus on her strengths and tried not to let other people's opinions influence her opinion about herself. However, this was not to say that Eleanor was able to avoid all blows to her self-esteem. For example, in 2009, prior to applying to PCC, Eleanor tried to enroll at DCC. The counselor there was skeptical of Eleanor's level of competency and

commitment. She discouraged Eleanor from returning to college. Disheartened by the counselor's reception of her, Eleanor acquiesced.

It took Eleanor six years to build up her courage to reapply to college after the DCC incident. This time she applied to PCC. As with her previous experience at DCC, Eleanor was once again discouraged, this time by a PCC counselor who tried to dissuade her from enrolling as a full-time student. "I thought that was kind of interesting because I always, if anything, it would be more supportive to continue your education" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). Were the counselors at DCC and PCC following a protocol for handling nontraditional students with a history of dropping out of college? The two counselors did not explain their actions to Eleanor. Whatever their reasons, these two counselors affected Eleanor's internal self-esteem by giving her the impression that staff and instructors at the community colleges were negatively perceiving her. In any case, Eleanor was eventually cleared to register for a class at PCC. She decided to defy her PCC counselor's directive and enroll as a full-time student. It was gratifying when she earned a 4.0 GPA in her first semester. From that point on, she knew that she was worthy and capable of handling college level courses. Nevertheless, the counselor's actions had an impact on her self-esteem for Eleanor refrained from approaching support service providers (e.g., Federal TRIO Programs, financial aid) in fear that they would not only deny her access to services, but also judge her as unworthy.

Self-actualization. At the time of the interview, Eleanor's physiological needs, need for safety, need for love and belonging, and need for esteem seem to have been at least partially met such that Eleanor could address her need for self-actualization. She was motivated to live life fully by doing what she loved to do. The problem was that she was not quite sure about what she wanted to do. She no longer wanted to be a nurse and was considering other options such as

becoming a teacher, counselor, or dental hygienist. She was especially interested in education, but was concerned about the relatively low salary. Eleanor had to choose between fulfilling her need for financial security or her need for self-actualization. This was what Kunst (2014) had discussed earlier. Eleanor was torn between staying in a safe zone and going into a field such as nursing which was what she had been exposed to since she got out of high school, or taking a risk by stepping out of her comfort zone to possibly achieve self-actualization in a field such as education, which she knew nothing about. In Eleanor's mind, what made the field of education so risky was that teachers did not make as much money as nurses.

In conclusion, Eleanor's life could be divided into three phases: time of childhood, time of abuse, and current times. As a child, Eleanor's physiological needs, need for safety, need for love, and need for esteem were met. For that reason, she was able to focus on self-actualization and entertain possible careers which might have allowed her to live life fully while doing what she loves to do. Things changed when Eleanor got into a relationship with an abusive partner. Suddenly, she could not longer focus on self-actualization because her lower needs for safety and love and belonging were not being met. When she moved to the mainland to escape her abuser, Eleanor still could not focus on self-actualization since she had to work in order to fulfill her physiological needs and need for safety. Currently, Eleanor's life has taken a turn for the better. Her physiological needs, need for safety, need for love and belonging, and need for esteem have been met. Thus, once again, she was able to focus on college and the possible careers that would bring about self-actualization.

Self-Determination Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Whereas, Maslow (1970) had a hierarchy of needs to be met in a specific order, the self-determination theory looked at whether the student's three innate psychological needs were being met in no specific order at that particular college.

Competence. One of the three innate psychological needs was competence (Deci et al., 1991). Analyzing Eleanor's innate need for competence meant determining if she experienced optimal challenges at PCC and received positive feedback in the process. If the assignments were too difficult or too easy and she constantly received negative feedback, then it was unlikely that her need for competence would be fulfilled at PCC; however, that was not the case for Eleanor.

It was evident that being a full-time college student, with three children, and holding a full-time job in itself was an optimal challenge. Yet, Eleanor was able to successfully balance her work, school and family obligations while maintaining a high GPA. The semester I interviewed Eleanor, she was taking a full load consisting of Speech 251, Nutrition 185, Math 100, and Art 101.

Eleanor's level of competency increased as she tackled issues with an open-mind and prevented her own biases from getting in the way. For example, in her sociology class, she was asked to write a letter to the lawmakers about same-sex marriage. This was an optimal challenge for Eleanor because she comes "from a very traditional Catholic family where you know it [same-sex marriage] is almost like taboo" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). By keeping an open mind, Eleanor was able to successfully listen to other people's ideas about the subject and present their points of view as well as her own. "And I, I think I, you don't have to

agree with it, but you just have to almost like understand, just understand, but you don't have to agree with it, and it's okay" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Based on her 3.87 GPA, it was safe to say that Eleanor's need for competence was met at PCC as she continued to spiral upwards to new levels of challenges and mastery.

Autonomy. Another one of the three innate psychological needs was autonomy (Deci et al., 1991). Eleanor's parents were always supportive of her academic goals, but as I mentioned earlier, they never pushed her to attend college or to go into a particular profession. Eleanor had total autonomy over these aspects of her life. As a youth, she thought that she might want to become an attorney like some of her mother's friends so when she was in high school she joined the speech and debate, and mock trail team. Then, she changed her mind when she heard fascinating stories from her uncle, the doctor, about patients in the emergency room.

Unexpectedly, somewhere between graduating from high school in 2002 and starting classes at FCC in 2003, Eleanor's dream to become a doctor or an attorney came to an abrupt end. Eleanor described how she settled for nursing when she enrolled in classes at FCC from 2003-2006. Eleanor did not reveal what happened; however, she may have met her abusive ex-partner at that point in her life. In any case, a few months out of high school, she landed a job in radiology at a local hospital in order to get her foot in healthcare. Then in 2006, Eleanor quit her job and dropped out of FCC without completing her prerequisites courses for nursing, and fled to the mainland. There, she continued to work in healthcare.

After working in the healthcare system for years, Eleanor became disenchanted with it. She noticed how the doctors and staff treated and cared for patients differently depending on the kind of insurance the patients' possessed.

> I think healthcare really has a lot to do with your insurance and I don't see healthcare here in the U.S. as universal. And I don't think I could make a career out of practicing like that, where the quality of care I give my patients is determined by their health care coverage . . . So for me that's just my opinion from what I've seen, you know, like a QWEST patient as opposed to a primary HMSA PPO patient, they don't get the same healthcare. You know they don't get the same quality of healthcare coverage. They don't get access to the same physicians and medication and treatment, so it's just not something I want to personally go further (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Despite Eleanor's disillusionment with the system, she continued to work as a medical biller to help support her family. At the same time, Eleanor was working diligently towards finding a major other than nursing. Eleanor has faced her share of disappointments in life, but continues to be self-determining, self-initiating, and self-regulating.

> [A]t the end of the day, you're the driver in your own life so you gotta just kind of take it, take it by the wheel and I don't know, take accountability for whatever part you have in it and just kind of roll with the punches (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Relatedness. The last of the three innate psychological needs was the need for relatedness (Deci et al., 1991). At PCC, Eleanor has spent minimal time on campus. She was a typical commuter student who went to class and left right after class ended. What she liked about PCC was that her classmates were less cliquish than those in high school or even in her nursing cohort at FCC. They all had their own schedule and they did their own thing. Despite her busy schedule, she was able to participate in Phi Theta Kappa's blood drive. It was her way of investing in an educationally relevant activity and meeting the requirements to qualify for Phi Theta Kappa's summer tuition scholarship.

From the time she began taking classes at PCC, Eleanor's interaction with peers, faculty, and staff have been mixed. On one hand, she was successful in developing connections with her peers. She also formed trusting relationships with two of her sociology instructors, an English instructor, a speech instructor, and her current counselor. She liked the instructors because they were welcoming, honest, genuine, organized, and structured. In their classes, Eleanor felt comfortable asking questions and expressing her opinion. Outside of class, these instructors had an open door policy and invited students to drop by whenever they needed help.

In one instance, the speech instructor allowed Eleanor's son to attend class because Eleanor could not find a babysitter for him. Eleanor's son had a fever so his school called to tell Eleanor to keep him at home until he got well. Eleanor could not leave him alone at home, but at the same time she did not want to miss her class, so she emailed her speech instructor who gave Eleanor permission to bring her son to class. Eleanor expressed her appreciation for flexible and accommodating PCC instructors like her speech instructor. She believed, "If life started to happen in the middle of the semester, I could talk to them and at least feel comfortable coming to a solution with them" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Interestingly, Eleanor decided which instructors were trustworthy based not only on her own experiences, but also by observing how they responded to the other students. There was an instance when a classmate had to miss numerous classes because of a health issue. Instead of failing the student, the instructor told the student to get the class notes from her peers and make up the work she missed. Seeing how supportive and merciful the instructor was, Eleanor decided that this instructor was indeed trustworthy. Eleanor was confident that this particular instructor would not judge her but instead offer her personal attention and act as an institutional agent if

she needed help. The relationships Eleanor formed with the instructors were crucial to fulfilling her need for relatedness at PCC.

While Eleanor's relationship with classmates and some of her instructors were advantageous to meeting her need for relatedness, her encounter with her first counselor was detrimental to truly feeling accepted at PCC. It was not just the message of judgment that bothered her, but the inappropriate way the message was delivered. Eleanor described the day she got a call from the PCC counselor. She remembered shopping at Sam's Club with her youngest daughter when out of the blue the PCC counselor called and told Eleanor that she had a hold on her account and could not register because she had been out of college for a while. The counselor told Eleanor, "there is no way you can handle school, you've got too much going on in your life, you need to prove to me that you're serious about school and coming back" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Upon hearing Eleanor's daughter in the background, the counselor continued on, "I can hear your little one in the back, obviously, you've go too much going on" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Eleanor tried to argue with the counselor to explain her situation.

> [S]he was just going on and on about how I couldn't handle it, there's no way at most she would only recommend for one class, and even at one class, I need to come and meet her and show her that I'm serious about school" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Eleanor felt that arguing was useless. The counselor came to a conclusion without listening to Eleanor. In frustration and disbelief, Eleanor hid her face from everyone passing by, and cried.

> I think what really upset me was this was all the reasons why I put coming back to school on hold for so long was because I knew, or at least I thought that there was a big

> possibility that people were going to judge my previous situation. And I just didn't want to deal with it. You know, like I'm so sick of the judgment. Like you have no idea what I've been through, you know, I would be glad to explain it to you, but don't judge it. You're either going to support me and help me or not (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Several days later when the hold on Eleanor's registration was released, Eleanor decided that "either I'm gonna just let them win in this situation or I'm just gonna say, f- it, you know. I'm gonna take this, this little challenge and say, 'I'm gonna do this whether you like it or not'" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Eleanor registered for 12 credits. The bad news was that Eleanor had no one to help determine which classes to take. What she did was print out a checklist of requirements for a liberal arts degree, look at her placement scores, check her personal schedule, and register for classes that she thought she needed. Three-fourths way into the first semester, Eleanor reluctantly made an appointment to see her counselor in person to register for the next semester. The counselor took the opportunity to chastise Eleanor about not seeing her earlier. She treated Eleanor as rudely in person as she did on the phone. In Eleanor's case, it was not the instructors, but her counselor who created a controlled environment by using extreme language to try to threaten Eleanor into submission.

Eleanor's experience with the counselor exemplified Deci et al. (1991) point that relatedness is as important as competence and autonomy. At PCC, Eleanor earned good grades, and had the autonomy to choose her own major, but it was not enough to make her feel like she belonged. In the back of her mind, she continued to ruminate about the counselor and the tension nagged at her well-being. She attempted to resolve the issue by changing counselors but that was not so easy to do. Eleanor said that she called the office multiple times to request a

different counselor; however, the person who answered the phone told Eleanor that she had to remain with her assigned counselor even though they did not get along and the counselor was unhelpful. The person said that it was the college's policy that students stay with the counselor assigned to them. Then, in Eleanor's third semester (one and a half years later), a different person answered the phone. This time Eleanor was told that she could change counselors; in fact, she was told that as a student she had the right to switch counselors.

> And she's like, "no problem, come in, fill out the form, pick a new counselor, and we need to get it approved." And I was like, you know, if you're going to work for the school then you need to be consistent with your answers too because you caused me two semesters of absolute frustration for nothing. I could've switched from the get-go (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Within a week, Eleanor was assigned to another counselor named Ruth. With Ruth, Eleanor was able to get the guidance she needed to track her degree requirements. She also received assistance with financial aid and scholarships. It took over a year at a two-year college for Eleanor to finally get the kind of support she was entitled to. Based on Ruth's reaction, it became obvious that the first counselor's inactions hindered Eleanor from receiving the financial aid and scholarships she qualified for and needed as a returning nontraditional college student with three young children. It also highlighted the fact that the first counselor got away with further victimizing a domestic violence survivor who was trying to get her life back on track.

Integrated regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. The type of extrinsic motivation that best described Eleanor's desire to go to college was integrated regulation. It was not intrinsic motivation because she was not going to college just for the sake of studying topics she was interested in. It was extrinsic because attending college was instrumental to her earning

a degree and getting into a particular career. As a medical biller who made about $20 an hour, she earned enough to help support her family, but she wondered how much more she could really make if she continued down this path. She envisioned greater financial stability and more opportunities if she were to earn a college degree. Eleanor internalized the importance of getting a college degree into her own set of values and freely engaged in college classes because she knew that it was worth her time.

According to Deci et al. (1991) internalization of an extrinsically contingent value such as earning a college degree most likely occurred in an autonomy supportive environment. As a youth, Eleanor's parents had provided her with this sort of autonomy supportive environment by encouraging her to explore and define her own interests. Furthermore, as a student at PCC, Eleanor met instructors who provided her with an autonomy supportive environment to further encourage internalization. They did so by giving her timely positive feedback, responding to emails within 48 hours, making themselves available during office hours, and assigning homework relevant to the course.

Introjected regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. If Eleanor could choose a major without worrying about her income, she said that she would choose education. She would love to have the opportunity to make a positive difference in her students' lives like how her former teacher such as Mr. Jacobs made a difference in her life. She also liked the idea of playing a role in her students' intellectual development. She felt a sense of satisfaction just watching others grow. Based on her enthusiasm about education, her motivation could be categorized as integrated regulation. The reason why I categorized it as an introjected regulation was because Eleanor felt guilty and anxious about wanting to pursue a career in teaching instead of nursing. Throughout the two days of interviews, Eleanor repeatedly justified why she should

not pursue a degree nursing even though she knew that it was a lucrative job. Hence, the introjected regulation referred to internalizing the value of getting a job to make the most money she could.

When Eleanor was growing up on the neighbor island, her parents and the private school teachers provided her with a supportive and secure environment where she could engage in activities she personally found inherently interesting. However, when she graduated from high school and became a young single parent with two children, things suddenly changed, and Eleanor had to quickly internalize the importance of being able to financially support herself and her children. Yet, she never fully accepted this extrinsic regulation as her own. It was evident when Eleanor made comments such as, "I think passion is more important that money" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). In other words, it was not an inherent interest to find a job just so that she could make money to support a family. The locus of causality for this value was external, but Eleanor's behavior to pursue this as a goal was internally driven as she thought about her children who depend on her. It was obvious that Eleanor was not inherently driven by money when she said that she just needed to make enough to "put a roof over their head and food on the table" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). Still, she had reservations about going into a relatively low-paying career. "I don't know if it's true but I hear you know that the salary is really low in education" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). She knew that if she majored in nursing, then her starting salary would be much higher than that of a public school teacher.

Nevertheless, as a mother of three, Eleanor felt like she must determine the best rate of return for her time spent in college and she had to do what was in the best interest of her family. "So I'm kind of like do I go into something that you know financially would be beneficial to my

family overall, do I go into something that I'm just really passionate about" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Her greatest concern was what if she majored in education and ended up making just as much or even less than what she made as a medical biller. She remembered meeting college graduates applying for entry-level positions that required only a high school diploma. In one instance, at Eleanor's former place of employment, she met a woman with a four-year degree in psychology applying for a $14 an hour job as a receptionist because she could not find work elsewhere.

For that reason, Eleanor felt pressure to choose a major that would draw a decent salary. Her counselor, Ruth, suggested that Eleanor takes an interest test to get a better idea about her possibilities. Yet, Eleanor's problem goes deeper than not knowing her interests; she needed someone to tell her whether she should pursue a non-lucrative passion or a lucrative major that could help the family of five live comfortably in the costly state of Hawai'i. "Like I don't want to go through college, earn a degree and end up in that boat where it's like, was it even worth it. So that's the part I'm really scared about" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

In conclusion, Eleanor seems to be motivated to persist in college because her three innate psychological needs were being met at PCC. That was not the case when she first enrolled at PCC. Nevertheless, the first counselor's actions did not seem to override Eleanor's motivation to persist. It may be because going to college was an integrated regulation for Eleanor. Her real dilemma was deciding whether to pursue a career in education to satisfy an interest or to choose a career that would significantly benefit her family's financial situation.

Expectancy-Value Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Like many others, Eleanor's outcome expectancy was that if she focused in school, studied hard, and got good grades, then she would get into college, earn a degree, and work in

the field of her choice. Earlier, Eleanor's field of choice was law or medicine; that is, she had every intention of becoming an attorney or a doctor. When her situation changed after graduating from high school, her expectancies also changed. She had to reassess her situation and determine what she had the ability to do to bring about a desirable outcome. Eleanor's efficacy expectation after high school was that she would remain on the neighbor island near her family, raise her children, take classes at FCC, work part-time at the local hospital, and major in nursing. This was her efficacy expectancy up until the time she had to abruptly flee to the mainland with her children. Then, she was forced to put aside her expectation of earning a college degree and instead focused on being a single parent with a toddler and a newborn to support.

Nine years later, Eleanor was back in Hawai‘i and at a point in her life when returning to college was possible. Her revised efficacy expectation was built upon her current role as a girlfriend, mother of three, and full-time medical biller. Starting from 2015, her efficacy expectancy was to enroll as a full-time student at a neighborhood community college while maintaining a full-time job. She wanted to earn an associate degree in liberal arts, transfer to GU, earn a bachelor's degree, then begin working in the field of her choice, making more money than she did as a medical biller.

High self-efficacy. One of the reasons why Eleanor did not give up on her dream of graduating from college was because she had high self-efficacy when it came to academics. She did well in school before so she knew she had the skills and cognitive ability to do well in college and achieve her academic endeavors. In fact, her efficacy expectancy continued to reflect her high self-efficacy.

Although Eleanor had high self-efficacy, she still was not in total control of her test anxieties. She had a tendency to set high expectations for herself, which caused her to become nervous, pale, light-headed, and sweaty during exams. It did not help that she constantly told herself, "I gotta, I gotta do good" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Realizing that her test anxiety was undermining her performance, Eleanor was trying to control it through deep breathing and relaxation techniques.

> Just kind of put my best foot forward, almost try to shut my self out, if that makes sense, just kind of quiet my own thoughts and zen into the moment. Like just breathe, relax and focus and that, that helps a little but my mind still continues to go so I almost try to shut myself up if you know, like shut my own mind up and just be like, just breath, breath and focus on one thing at a time but I'm always scared to fail you know. And I'm scared to not do good in the class. I think, "Oh my God, it's going to affect my GPA," and then this and then that, yeah. But I'm scared to fail (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

It was obvious that she was still in the process of learning how to deal with her test anxiety, but it has not interfered with her level of persistence. When Eleanor failed, she attributed it to uncontrollable situations. For example, dropping out of FCC had nothing to do with Eleanor's ability to do college level work, and everything to do with an uncontrollable situation of having to contend with an abusive ex-partner.

Incentives and values. Earning a college degree was appealing to Eleanor since it represented accomplishment and power. Eleanor knew that she had the academic adroitness to earn an associate degree, bachelor's degree and even master's degree. She was not attracted to majoring in education or dental hygiene because of its inverse linear function; that is quite the

contrary, Eleanor leaned in towards pursuing majors she held in high regards and where she expected to succeed. There was a positive relationship between expectancy and value.

Cost value. From the time Eleanor moved to the mainland until the time she registered for classes at PCC, she worked diligently to provide for her family. Hence, giving up part of her income was one of the hesitations she had about returning to college. In order to balance work, family, and student life, Eleanor worked from home even though she could make more money working at a hospital or doctor's office. At this point in her life, she was able to balance work and going to school, but she said that if she were forced to choose, she would have to choose work.

Eleanor has also sacrificed spending time with her boyfriend, three children, other family members, and friends. When Eleanor showed up to the children's games or practices, she said that she was physically there but not mentally there. She had her nose to the books, reading for the next class. It was not only Eleanor who was making sacrifices, her boyfriend had made sacrifices too. For example, when Eleanor could not take the children to their after school activities, her boyfriend left work early so that he could get back to their neighborhood in time and take the children to their practices.

Attainment value. Eleanor worked to demonstrate how competent she perceived herself to be. It was especially important when she first enrolled at PCC. Not only did she have to prove her competence to the counselor but also to herself. Hence, earning a 4.0 GPA in her first semester while taking 12 credits was an important accomplishment that confirmed her ability to handle college level work. In class, she emerged as one of the model students who produced good quality work. Eleanor mentioned that in her sociology class, the instructor used her work as an example of what he expected from all of his students. Knowing how well she did on her

assignments, Eleanor's classmates sought her advice. One classmate said, "I need your help, like come on. I'm not, I don't ever get a 40 out of 40 on any of my assignments you know. Help me and let me know what you're doing differently than I am" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Intrinsic value. Eleanor's intrinsic value was to help others. It was the reason why she was previously interested in becoming a doctor or nurse and why she could pursue education, counseling or dental hygiene. One of her more recent discoveries was that she also enjoyed learning about societies and the way people thought. While taking classes at PCC, it was not the science courses or math courses that captured her attention, but courses such as sociology and psychology. Being exposed to a variety of subjects may help Eleanor decide what to major in.

> I think sociology is about people right, people and society as a whole so I didn't really expect to maybe be really be interested in that, but that and sociology, psychology was really interesting. You know just kind of studying, understanding how our human mind works. That's pretty cool (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Utility value. Eleanor understood that if she endured the dreaded mundane uninteresting subjects long enough, then she could successfully achieve her long-term goals. It was evident that she learned utility value from a young age. Perhaps it all started when she chose to regularly meet with a reading tutor outside of class in order to improve her reading skills. She continued to exhibit this value when she was a student at the Nursing Academy at FCC. She ignored her cohort members' "high schoolish" (personal communication, March 1, 2016) behavior because she knew that one day she could graduate and become a nurse. More recently, Eleanor exhibited utility value when she tolerated the PCC counselor's behavior because she knew that it was an opportunity for her to return to college and earn a degree. Even in her daily life as a college

student, Eleanor engaged in activities not particularly interesting to her so that she could fulfill the core requirements to graduate. This was the case in her art, history, and religion classes.

Motive. The final factor in the expectancy-value theory was motive. Atkinson (1957) asked whether the person tends to strive to achieve success and maximize satisfaction or strive to avoid failure and minimize pain. If Eleanor's motive was to avoid failure, then clearly she would have resisted the idea of returning to college to risk failure, shame, pain, and humiliation again. It was obvious that her first counselor at PCC expected her to fail. Earlier at DCC, and again at PCC, Eleanor was sternly warned about this possibility. Interestingly, the DCC and PCC counselors' motives were to strive to avoid failure rather than strive to achieve success. In other words, both counselors held a negative disposition of what would happen if students who had once failed before were to return to college. The counselors made it a point to advise college dropouts not to return to college in order to help them as well as the school avoid another situation connected with failure, pain, shame, and humiliation. The message to students was that they should move on and consider working full time or doing something else.

As for Eleanor, her motive was to strive to achieve success. As a young adult aiming to become a nurse, she took on intermediate tasks that would set her up for success. For example, right after high school, without any training, Eleanor took on an entry-level position at a local hospital to gain some experience in healthcare. She knew that the more she was around other healthcare workers and patients, the more familiar she would become with the field. In a more recent example, when Eleanor returned to college, she chose to attend a neighborhood community college. It was an example of what Atkinson (1957) referred to as an intermediate difficult task rather than a too easy task or a too difficult task. If she wanted a program that guaranteed success, then she would have enrolled in a certificate program. If she had opted to

attend an institution that was too difficult with a low probability of success, then she might have applied to competitive four-year universities where her chances of being accepted were unrealistic considering that she had to submit her FCC transcript. Instead, Eleanor chose to start off as a liberal arts major at a community college. She was taking 12 credits a semester knowing that it would take her three years to graduate instead of two. She was realistic about her multiple obligations and registered for three online classes and one on-campus class so that she could spend most of her time at home. Eleanor took the necessary steps to construe her own environment in order to succeed.

In conclusion, Eleanor began with a particular outcome expectancy; however, when her situation changed after high school, she readjusted her expectancies to match what she thought she could do in that particular situation that would bring about a desirable outcome. This was what Eccles and Wigfield (2002) referred to as efficacy expectancy. Her efficacy expectancy to become a teacher, counselor or dental hygienist reflected her intrinsic values and high self-efficacy. That is, Eleanor had a positive function of expectancy. With a motive to achieve success, she worked hard in college to prove how competent she perceived herself to be, knowing that one day all of her sacrifices would pay off.

Attribution Theory as a Basis for Analysis

In determining how much effort individuals would exert in a particular task, how active they would be in accomplishing the task, and how persistent they would be, Weiner (1986) suggested examining the individuals' previous positive outcomes and negative outcomes to see how these outcomes impacted the individuals' emotions. Then, he recommended identifying what the individuals attributed as the cause of their past positive and negative outcomes. In

Eleanor's case, she has had several negative outcome dependent affects and a positive outcome dependent affect that influenced her level of intensity, latency, and persistence in college.

Weiner (2010) stated that while people reflected about the causation of positive outcomes, they were more likely to reflect and search for explanations for unexpected negative outcome dependent affects. That was the case for Eleanor when she experienced domestic violence. When Eleanor was first abused, she must have been surprised to be treated this way by the father of her children who supposedly loved her. Looking at the causal antecedents, Eleanor gave no indication that she had a past history of abusive parents or had experienced anything like this in her childhood. She attributed the cause of her physical and emotional pain to external, stable, uncontrollable factors. That is, it was external because her partner was physically stronger than her and mentally unstable. Moreover, it was uncontrollable and stable because there was no one and nothing that could control or stop him from stalking and abusing her. What was most unexpected was the fact that security guards, police officers, lawyers, and even a judge could not protect her even though she had a restraining order against him. Eleanor sadly learned that there was a limit as to what the law could do. On top of that, there seems to be a social norm that bystanders did not get involved in domestic violence issues. She was surprised to see how her nursing cohort members and nursing college instructors refused to acknowledge the situation and failed to offer aid. There was a glimmer of hope when a fortuitous event occurred in the emergency room where Eleanor met the nurse, a fellow domestic violence survivor. Through Eleanor's own efforts (internal, unstable, controllable attribute), she was eventually able to break free from her abuser.

Rather than let the past traumatic experience control her, Eleanor decided to empower herself by becoming a member of the Hawai'i State Coalition against Domestic Violence. Along

with other committee members, she shares her first hand perspective about domestic violence to the new recruits at the local police department. Eleanor was able to take an unexpected negative outcome attributed to an external, stable, uncontrollable force and turn it into an experience where she could draw from to make a difference in other people's lives. Despite the severity of her experience, Eleanor showed no signs of learned helplessness; instead, she continued to believe that she could actively respond to a situation and change its outcome through effort and persistence. Eleanor did not like to dwell on past setbacks; her motto was, "That's life, you got to just accept it and move forward from it" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

In her first semester at PCC, after having taken a long hiatus from college, Eleanor was ecstatic to learn that she made straight As in all four of her classes. She had just experienced a positive outcome dependent affect. It should have been of no surprise, considering her past history of graduating with honors from a private college-prep high school. Eleanor attributed her success to knowing what instructors expected of their students, being organized, turning in her assignments on time, and putting 100% effort into all of her assignments. Eleanor thought that successful outcomes was not so much about the amount of intelligence you were born with, but about the amount of effort you put into the task.

> I think it's effort. I think you can learn anything if you put effort into it. I mean at least some of that. You can definitely learn. So I don't think learning is necessarily intelligence, I think it's effort (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

When Eleanor compared herself to her classmates, she modestly admitted that she was doing better than others. Many of the other students turned in their assignments late or turned in assignments without putting in much thought or effort. Eleanor said that these C-average

students did "just enough to slide by and just continue" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

For that reason, Eleanor made the effort to seek out her instructors when she had questions, worked on her writing at the writing center, and better organized her presentations at the speech lab. She believed that it was all about the amount of effort she put into her schoolwork. The locus of control was internal and it was controllable. On the other hand, she recognized that there were external factors that played a role in her academic success. For example, if her boyfriend did not help out with finances and children, then Eleanor would not have enough time and resources to pursue her degree. Eleanor knew that her success at PCC was an unstable factor. She knew that at any time her family obligations or the family's financial status could change. Even a little change could be enough to upset the delicate balance she had going for her to be successful in college.

The second unexpected negative outcome was encountering her first PCC counselor who discouraged Eleanor from returning to college. I could tell that Eleanor was angry about her encounter with this counselor because during the two days I interviewed her, she brought up the experience six times and talked about it extensively each time. Perhaps she should have expected it since it happened once before in 2008 soon after she returned from the mainland to O'ahu and tried to enroll in classes at DCC. Perhaps she should have expected it since she was an older nontraditional student with an academic history of dropping out of college, three children, and a full-time job. However, if there were a school policy that excluded or limited students like Eleanor, then it should be explicitly articulated on the community college's website and in their other informational brochures.

Eleanor attributed her setback to external, stable, controllable causal dimensions. The locus of causality was external since Eleanor had no say in which counselor was assigned to her and how the counselor would treat her. What made it worse was that Eleanor seemed to be stuck with this counselor. Hence, this counselor was a stable causality for one and a half years, which left Eleanor feeling uncertain about her future at PCC. Although the whole matter was outside of Eleanor's control, it was something that the counselor had control over. In other words, the counselor was in total control over how much help Eleanor got in registering for the right classes, applying for financial aid and scholarships specifically set aside for Native Hawaiian students, and connecting with other support services on campus. In response, Eleanor actively and intensely worked toward a solution until her persistence paid off and she successfully changed counselors.

The third negative outcome that Eleanor discussed was how she earned her first B at PCC for a developmental math course. It was an unexpected outcome since in the past Eleanor had always done well in math. For example, she shared that in her senior year she got an A in college calculus. Eleanor attributed her grade to external, stable, uncontrollable causal dimensions. "Math 28, it was a self instructed semester so you basically go to class, you have to attend class, but you teach yourself on the computer through the software" (personal communication, February 28, 2016). The instructor was there only to answer specific questions. Although Eleanor did not like the format of the class, the situation was out of her control and it was not going to change so she persisted and continued to put in the effort to pass the course. As a result, Eleanor got a B, which brought her cumulative GPA down from 4.0 to 3.87.

In conclusion, there were three unexpected negative outcome dependent affects that could have discouraged Eleanor from persisting in her college endeavors. Fortunately, they did not.

Part of the reason was that Eleanor attributed most negative outcomes to external, unstable causal dimensions that had nothing to do with her level of ability or intelligence. Furthermore, from a young age, Eleanor learned that positive outcomes and getting out of problematic situations were usually possible by being actively involved in learning, exerting much effort, and being persistent until the end.

Self-Theory as a Basis for Analysis

To determine what role motivation played in Eleanor's decision to persist using the self-theory, I looked for evidence to support whether she had a fixed-mindset or a growth-mindset. Those with a fixed-mindset believe that a person's intelligence is set throughout one's lifetime; whereas, those with a growth-mindset think that intelligence is malleable and can be developed throughout one's lifetime. People's mindsets influence how they react to failures and setbacks – either they give up if they think intelligence is fixed or press forward if they think that it all depends on the amount of effort they exert and the learning strategies they use. It is important to note that often people have a combination of mindsets within a specific domain.

When I asked Eleanor whether she thought people were born with a certain amount of intelligence and ability or if intelligence and ability could be significantly changed, she replied: "I do think that there are some people who are born smarter than others, I don't know. But I think a lot of that is learned. It's just learned in general" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Her answer pointed towards a growth-mindset.

Eleanor substantiated her belief in a growth-mindset with her actions. When it came to academics, Eleanor believed that she had the capacity to continuously learn new challenging things throughout her lifetime. Hence, it was not surprising that Eleanor returned to college almost a decade after she dropped out. Once she proved her capacity to handle college level

work in her first semester, she settled into a rhythm of engaging in and mastering increasingly difficult academic challenges. She tackled current issues by keeping an open mind while questioning her own biases as she did when wrote a letter to the lawmakers about same-sex marriage. She viewed constructive criticisms as the instructors' way of helping her improve.

> I mean honestly at times I'm a little bit hesitant, you know because I feel like, "oh, what if I, I, I don't succeed at it," but overall I think I feel pretty confident about at least trying it, you know. I know that I definitely won't be able to master them all, but I'm okay with trying it because I feel like it's going to broaden my horizons and I like when the teachers kind of just push you to step out of your comfort zone. Yeah, it is, I think like a growing experience, that's why. So, yeah. I'm not 100% confident to do it, you know I'm a little hesitant but at the same time I'm willing to try (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

Eleanor's growth-mindset challenged Dweck's (1975) prediction that trait praises led to a fixed-mindset where learners rejected new challenging tasks for fear of failure. As innocent as trait praises appeared to be, Dweck (2006) claimed that making comments about an individual's trait of goodness resulted in the individual feeling judged by those making the comment. The individual felt pressured into maintaining a positive label such as being a good child or an excellent student which could have led to the avoidance of future tasks with a high possibility of failure. At first glance, that did not seem to be the case with Eleanor despite receiving trait praises from her parents all of her life. Eleanor shared how her parents would praise her for being a "good [person] you know, not just a good daughter, a good mother, [a] good individual" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). The praises were meant to foster Eleanor's confidence, but at the same time these praises could be interpreted as positive labels that Eleanor must live up to.

However, upon closer look, there were some clues that Eleanor might have been influenced by the trait praises for she did show signs of having a bit of a fixed-mindset. It would not be surprising since most people are a combination of both. Dweck (2006) explained how students with a fixed-mindset believed, "If success had meant they were intelligent, then less-than-success meant they were deficient" (p. 72). In Eleanor's case, she put a lot of pressure on herself to be a good student and to earn perfect scores in college. Was this an indication of a fixed-mindset when it came to academic grades?

> I have high expectations for myself too. So if I don't, if I don't exceed where I expect to, ho, then I get really disappointed. "Why didn't I get a 100? How come I got a 98? What the hell didn't I do right?" Sometimes I need to go a little easier on myself too. It's like, it's okay, it's okay, it's all right (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

On the other hand, perhaps striving for perfect grades was not evidence that Eleanor had a fixed-mindset, but her way of demonstrating competency to those who doubted her (e.g., first PCC counselor) as well as to herself. Another possible reason why Eleanor strived for perfect grades even when she did not a have a particular major in mind was because she knew that her GPA would determine which programs she could get into in the future. "I was like, 'oh my God, if I don't do good in this, this is going to affect my GPA. It was horrible and when I read the stuff [on the exam] I was so overwhelmed" (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

In any case, Eleanor could have a bit of a fixed-mindset when it came to grades. However, it was overpowered by her growth-mindset, in other words, her strong desire to better herself. Possibly, her strong growth-mindset was influenced by the effort praises (e.g., good job, I like this idea) she received from instructors at PCC. Of course Eleanor did not differentiate between praise types, she just knew that she liked receiving feedback from her instructors.

> I don't know, all the little comments that they make because it helps me to know that I am where I should be, if that makes sense. You know I'm grasping the information, I'm understanding but I feel like I need feedback. Because other than that I don't know if I'm doing good, I don't really know you know where I stand in the class (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

In addition, Eleanor also received strategy praises from her classmates. In one instance, students in her sociology class pressed Eleanor for strategy tips. They wanted to know exactly what she was doing differently that earned her perfect scores. According to Dweck (2006), the importance of process praises (i.e., effort praises, strategy praises) was that they encouraged a growth-mindset since they emphasized hard work and effective strategies as ways to bring about good outcomes.

I was intrigued with the two community college counselors and their possible mindsets. The question I asked myself was why did they discourage students like Eleanor from re-entering college. Perhaps it was because they believed that students who failed once were more likely to fail again. Going a little deeper, I asked myself why would they think that? The counselors' thinking seems to coincide with a fixed-mindset. Dweck's (1975) theory stated that those with a fixed-mindset believed that observing a person in a point in time allowed them to determine the person's intelligence, personality, and moral character. These things can be thought of as permanent. Those who were intelligent and capable would perform well at any given point in time, while those unintelligent or incapable would never succeed no matter how much effort they exerted. Hence, the question these counselors seem to be asking returning students was "what makes you think that you can succeed this time around when you could not succeed the last time?" There was no evidence that they actually asked Eleanor this question; they took the

liberty to answer the question for her. Rather than risk the chance of waiting for students like Eleanor to fail again which counted against the college's retention rate, they concluded that it would be better to divert them into other life activities that did not require a college degree.

> You know how she kind of labeled me as the college drop out who wasn't successful in college before because I left in the middle of the semester . . . and I moved to the mainland. You know I was a mom so I'm too busy, I've got too much going on, how could you handle it with three kids, so, I don't know, you know not necessarily discriminating me because of my race, but just discriminating me because of all the different roles I have in my life . . . she didn't even give me a shot, you know, she just automatically said that I would fail, and I thought that was kind of harsh (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

In conclusion, Dweck's (1975) self-theory highlighted that Eleanor's growth-mindset was what enabled her to persevere in college the second time around. In addition, the self-theory's fixed mindset helped explain why the two community college counselors were determined to block previous college dropouts from re-entering their particular post-secondary institution.

Closing Comments

I asked Eleanor why she thought students dropped out of college. She summed it up in a single thought, "I think life happens" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Eleanor explained that some students dropped out because they were not prepared for college. Eleanor recalled when she first started college and how she did not know what to expect. "I remember going to [FCC] and they're like, "oh, you gotta go to [the] bookstore and buy books,' I'm like, "what?' You know, it was just so new to me" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). She could not believe that everyone expected her to be so independent and self-sufficient.

Eleanor said that other students dropped out because of their financial burdens especially if they were forced to work to support themselves. Eleanor spoke from experience. She knew what it was like to have no time for school because you had to work.

There was one point that Eleanor wanted to drive home about student retention based on her experience. "[T]his is important in order, you know in order for the kids to continue going to school. You gotta feel like this is a safe place where if I need help I can reach out for help" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Eleanor could not believe how unsafe she felt physically and emotionally at FCC. Moreover, she was appalled at the way school personnel handled the situation simply by ignoring it. Eleanor would like to see more instructors or counselors follow up with students who miss several classes in a row. It would let the students know that people care. By consistently ignoring the students' absences, instructors were sending students a very loud and clear message that they really did not matter.

> [Y]ou feel like you're just another number. And you're success and failure just doesn't even matter. I don't know that's how I feel sometimes, I'm just another student you know. There's nothing really personal about me that anybody will take into account so, just being another student makes you feel like oh well, if I do good I do good, if I don't, I don't. Either way, it doesn't matter. They can always replace my seat with somebody else's (personal communication, March 1, 2016).

This time around, Eleanor was committed to earning a college degree and she was in it for the long haul. Eleanor persisted because she wanted to earn a degree not only for her parents and children, but also for herself. She was in college to "pursue a career that she is passionate about" (personal communication, March 1, 2016) and at the same time to increase her earning potential. Eleanor realized the value of a college degree. "I feel like as time goes on in our

society, people judge who you are by what you do, the position you have, the degree you do or don't have" (personal communication, March 1, 2016). Eleanor has had enough of being pushed to the side just because she lacked a college degree.

Findings and Analysis for Claire

Tinto's Conceptual Schema as a Basis for Analysis

Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema stated that the students' decision to persist or drop out was determined by their pre-entry attributes, as well as their integration into the academic system and social system.

Family background. Family background was one of three pre-entry attributes that affected the students' initial commitment (Tinto, 1975). Prior to having children, Claire's mother had moved to the state of Hawai'i when she was only 18 years old. She fortuitously met a ranch owner named Faye who took a liking to her and offered her lodging in exchange for labor. Claire's mother agreed to the arrangement. What she got in return was far more than just lodging, she and her future daughters became like family to Faye. Thus, Claire referred to Faye as her *hanai* grandmother, which can be translated as adopted grandmother. Claire remembered how beautiful Faye's secluded mountainside ranch was.

In addition to working on the ranch, Claire's mother also worked as a waitress and substitute teacher. She had taken some college classes but never completed the requirements for a degree. Perhaps that is why she never expected her daughters to go to college. Claire did not know much about her biological father, except for the fact that he completed high school and ran his own business. It had always been just Claire, her mother, and her older sister, Jen. By the time Claire was 12 years old, she was expected to work and do whatever was necessary to fend

for herself. When she was 14, she got her first part-time job to help out with the family's finances.

Precollege schooling. The second pre-entry attribute that affected the student's initial commitment was academic preparation (Tinto, 1975). When Claire was a freshman and sophomore at Prospect High School (PHS), she made honor roll with her 3.5 GPA. However, in her junior year, Claire decided to cut class, hang out with her boyfriend, and do whatever she wanted to do. Her GPA fell to below 2.0. Then, in her senior year, she decided to get serious about school again because she wanted to graduate with the rest of her class. She attended classes, did the assignments, and studied for exams. As a result she was able to bring her GPA back up to over 2.0. Claire described PHS as one of three largest public high schools on the island. Despite the size, she knew all of her classmates since they all went to the same schools together. Interestingly, the faculty members and staff at PHS did not push their students to go to college.

> [T]hey kind of just were like, "okay, you guys make it," and it's like you had to go on like your own time and see the counselor and staff and they wouldn't really push for you to come and see them and like try to get something going for you after school like as far as college goes. Like they would hand out papers but nobody's going to read that (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Claire's favorite teacher at PHS was Ms. Williams because she was strict and expected a lot from the students. At the same time, she was a lot of fun. In contrast, Claire's worst class was math. She remembered how she had to retake math every summer just so that she could pass to the next grade level.

Individual attributes. The last pre-entry attribute was individual attributes (Tinto, 1975). Claire described herself as determined; that is, she was willing to do whatever it took to achieve her goals. She had always been the golden child in the family, capable of staying out of trouble and willing to persevere in school. She also referred to herself as book smart for she was able to comprehend what she was reading.

Initial commitment to college. Despite some of Claire's unfavorable pre-entry attributes, she seems to be committed to the goal of college completion at PCC.

Academic integration. Unlike the other students I interviewed, Claire attended the same two-year college for over six years. She began taking classes in 2010 and was still enrolled in Spring 2016. Claire fit into what Marti (2008) referred to as the long-term group -- those who continued to take classes at the same school for over two years. Claire fluctuated from not taking any classes to taking classes full-time.

During her time at PCC, she was able to maintain a 3.88 cumulative GPA while completing 34 credits over eight semesters. Moreover, she successfully completed four developmental education courses; that is, Math 24, Math 25, English 21, and English 22. Claire met the college's academic standards.

Social integration. As a sixth year community college student, Claire developed a strong sense of belonging at PCC by forming relationships with others on campus including her counselor and several instructors. It seems like one of her greatest joys was being perceived as a den mother among her peers. She encouraged the younger students, especially those new to campus, to buy their books, do their assignments, and study for exams. "I kind of like mom on them, just like, 'you guys, make sure you have your notes, make sure you study all these things, make sure you do this,' so on and so forth. And then they're like, 'oh, okay'" (personal

communication, February 25, 2016). Because of Claire's strong sense of belonging at PCC, she detested the idea of going to any other community colleges or to a university to complete her degree in early childhood and special education. She liked the small campus and felt overwhelmed just thinking about attending a four-year "real college, for real university" (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Modified commitment to college. Claire's successful integration into the academic and social systems at PCC positively impacted her commitment. I would say that Claire's modified commitment to the goal of degree completion at PCC improved from when she first began.

In conclusion, Claire's pre-entry attributes, more specifically, her family background and precollege schooling amounted to a questionable initial commitment; however, her academic and social integration led to higher levels of modified commitment.

Maslow's Hierarchy as a Basis for Analysis

Maslow (1970) stated that people were only able to tend to their higher needs once their lower needs were at least partially met.

Physiological needs and need for safety. Since Claire had no problem satisfying her physiological needs, she was free to focus on her need for safety. For the most part, Claire's need for safety was met. She grew up in a safe environment on the ranch, had a dependable mother who provided for them, and was sheltered from extraordinary threats and fearful situations. It was not to say that Claire's family life was perfect. For example, Claire recalled a chaotic time when her sister, Jen, was put in jail for the possession of marijuana.

> Like right out of high school. She was working at like a T-shirt printing place and I guess like some boys walked over there to like smoke weed with her, and then they said it

was hers. So she had to go to jail and stuff (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Claire and her mother were ordered to attend some of Jen's therapy sessions. At one of the sessions, the therapist accused Claire of being a co-parent to her older sister. This accusation did not sit well with Claire. In fact, it was one of the reasons she moved away from home. She wanted to draw clear boundaries with her sister. However, the main reason for Claire's move was because she wanted to get a fresh start after causing a head-on collision while driving drunk. Claire was in disbelief when she heard that a woman in the other car suffered severe leg injuries. As soon as the other party decided to drop the charges, Claire bought a one-way ticket to O'ahu using her tax refund. It was as if she were trying to flee from a situation that was causing her anxiety and chaos. She was driven by her need for safety.

> And I'm just thankful that I didn't kill anyone cause I would have been like… That's bad, so… That's a good way to learn something, a hard way to learn something, but that's a good way to learn something, you know. That just, can't do that kind of stuff anymore, I kind of gotta just take care of yourself and you know, once you have kids, it's a whole other world (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Claire settled down on O'ahu and eventually began taking classes at PCC in 2010 to pursue a major in nursing. In 2012, Claire gave birth to her second child, a daughter. Then, when her daughter was just three months old, the daughter was diagnosed with a rare brain disorder. Claire immediately dropped her classes that semester and spent the next year at her daughter's side at the hospital.

When Claire's daughter was first diagnosed, Claire was devastated. The doctors had to prescribe anti-anxiety medication to calm her down. However, Claire could not tolerate the side

effects so she decided to deal with her new norm through meditation and deep breathing. One of her biggest challenges was getting used to preparing food that could be syringed into her daughter's tubing everyday. Fortunately, Claire's daughter qualified for Medicaid, which meant that she had access to a personal nurse who could help her with her daily needs and accompany her to preschool. When Claire's daughter first began going to preschool, Claire thought that she would go back to work. She got a job as a bookkeeper. It lasted for about a year and a half before Claire realized that she could not handle a full-time job while caring for her elementary aged son and young daughter. Claire and her husband decided that it would best if Claire quit her job and took care of the children while he continued to work full time as a bartender. Since Claire left the job market, she has been able to create a secure, stable and orderly environment for her family.

Claire was able to attend PCC because of its close proximity to her home and to the children's school. She developed a routine free from chaos. In the mornings, she gets the children ready for school. Then, the nurse arrives to take Claire's daughter to school while Claire drops her son off at his private school. After, Claire drives to PCC, does her homework, and attends classes. Once classes are over, she does the housework, picks up her son from school, helps him with his homework, and takes him to baseball practice. After baseball practice, Claire cooks dinner, prepares food for her daughter's final syringe feed, and puts them both to bed. Everything runs like clockwork. It is important to note how tight her schedule is in order to understand why Claire is resistant about going to another college or university to complete her degree requirements. In Claire's situation, her first priority is to meet the family's need for safety by maintaining a secure, stable, and dependable routine.

Need for love and belonging. As a child, Claire's mother, *hanai* grandmother, and sister satisfied her need for love and belonging. Claire described her mother as very supportive. When Claire finally decided to go to college five years out of high school, it was her mother who volunteered to pay for her tuition and fees. She paid for Claire's college endeavor from 2010 until she could no longer work. In Spring 2016, Claire applied for financial aid for the first time. Another key figure in Claire's life was her *hanai* grandmother Faye. Claire was extremely grateful for everything that Faye did for her family. Hence, it was not surprising to hear that Claire spend as much time as she could with her grandmother Faye until passed away at the age of 102.

In school, Claire had no problem feeling like she belonged since grew up and went to school with the same group of students. Based on what she shared about cutting class in her high-school junior year, it can be assumed that she looked to her boyfriend for love and belonging and was willing to defy school rules to please him. It was what Woolfolk (2014a) warned educators about - students who place a high value on belonging to a defiant peer group were less likely to comply with school rules and teachers' instructions.

When I met Claire, she had been meeting much of her need for love and belonging from her husband and two children. She knew that she was essential to their lives and they counted on her for their well-being. Claire's husband was 10 years older than Claire and was very supportive of her college endeavor. He was ecstatic to hear that Claire was interested in going into early childhood and special education. This was her third change in majors. First, Claire wanted to go into nursing, then physical therapy, and then education. His response to her latest endeavor, was "I think that's like the best idea you've ever had" (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Need for esteem. When Claire was a child, she took on more household responsibilities than her older sister which may have played a part in the development of her internal self-esteem. By the time she was an adult, she knew that she was capable of managing her own household. Furthermore, when Claire was in high school, she seems to be confident in her academic abilities for she had no doubt that she could bring her GPA back up to meet the standard of requirements for high school graduation.

After high school, Claire moved to O‘ahu and began working at a restaurant that served alcohol. Because she was too young to be a waitress, Claire ended up working as a hostess and office trainee. This was when she learned to do bookkeeping, auditing and accounts receivable. Eventually, when she turned 21, she became a waitress and earned good tips. However, she never forgot what she learned in the office. This random background skill as she called it, strengthened her self-image of being a strong, competent person with an invaluable skill in business. It also helped her to secure a bookkeeping job at a prestigious restaurant on O‘ahu a few years later. I cannot help but wonder if her identity as a bookkeeper at a prestigious restaurant got in the way of Claire pursuing a degree. In other words, since she already has a specialized skill to fall back on, did she really believe that she had to persevere and earn a college degree in order to be successful? After all, she was already making $45,000 as a bookkeeper.

Self-actualization. Claire's lower needs and need for esteem appeared to have been at least partially met, so that she could focus on self-actualization. Apparently, working in the restaurant business no longer brought her the same satisfaction as it did before she had children. Now, Claire was driven to live life fully by learning as much as she could about special needs children. She was not driven by money, but by doing what she valued.

> [I]t has nothing to do with how much I will make later on. Uhm, as long as I can make with the bare minimal for my family to have a house to live or you know, things like that. It doesn't matter. Gotta love it. Gotta love what you do (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In conclusion, Claire was able to focus on self-actualization because her lower needs and need for esteem had been met. It was interesting to note that when Claire's daughter was diagnosed with a physical condition, Claire dropped out of her classes that semester to focus on her need for safety. It was in line with Maslow's (1970) hierarchy. Any unfamiliar or threatening situation such as a medical issue could draw the individual's attention away from their higher needs and back to their need for safety.

Self-Determination Theory as a Basis for Analysis

The implication of the self-determination theory was that college students were driven to persist in attaining their degree at a particular college when their need for competence, autonomy and relatedness were being met (Deci et al., 1991).

Competence. One of the innate psychological needs was competence. Ryan and Deci (2000a) stated that people were drawn to learn and become competent in a particular subject because they were curious. This desire to learn helped them prepare for new situations in an ever-changing world. In Claire's case, she developed an interest in special education because of her daughter's condition. Special education was the only thing that piqued her interest. "If anything that I would want to learn, to continue to learn would be just about every kid's different needs" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). This was one of the reasons why Claire continued to persist in college.

In class, Claire's competency was a result of her ability and willingness to tackle any optimal challenges that came her way.

> Cause I don't even know what I'm getting into. It's called something, but, like elementary music, she's like, "okay like this, and we're just doing like solfege" and then we're doing ukulele, and I'm like, "whoa, I thought we're going to just sing kumbaya, and be like fine." So I would say, and that was supposed to be my easy class and it's not so easy (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Claire noted that she was not one to switch classes when she found out that a teacher was hard or when there was a lot of work to be done. Her attitude was "just got to do it. I guess that's how, I just kind of look at it, look at everything, cause you just got to do it, there's no if, ands, or buts" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Claire's need for competence was being met at PCC because she faced optimal challenges with an attitude of determination.

Autonomy. Another innate psychological need was autonomy (Deci et al., 1991). Growing up in a single parent household with a mother working multiple jobs to make ends meet, Claire had minimum supervision and a lot of autonomy. In her junior year, it was easy for Claire to skip school because her mother was busy working, "I would get dropped off at school and then just leave. Like wouldn't even go to class, just leave, like I would have my boyfriend pick me up, and we just go" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). Yet, when her GPA fell to below 2.0 and she was in jeopardy of not graduating, Claire chose to return to school, study, and graduate with the rest of her class. Claire learned that with autonomy came responsibility.

Five years after graduating from high school, Claire chose to pursue a college degree. She strongly believed that individuals should not go to college unless they were serious about learning and ready to do the hard work.

> If you don't want to do that, don't waste your parent's time, don't waste your parent's money. I mean, to me, even my son he's going to get that question, "do you want to go now, are you ready to go now. Cause I'm going to pay for you to go. You don't do it, I'm not doing it." Like you got to be as willing as I am, to put it in, for you to get something out of it. Cause if I'm going to put it in, you got to get something out of it (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

With no one pushing her into any particular major, Claire independently explored her possible options of majors. She also had autonomy over the number of credits she took every semester since she did not rely on financial aid. That is to say, she had total control over her pace of study. When her daughter was diagnosed in 2012, Claire had a legitimate reason to drop out of college but chose not to. Instead, she took a year and a half off before returning to PCC.

Claire did not believe in forcing people to learn things they were not interested in. She pointed out that this was the problem that her son was currently facing in school.

> So I think it just depends on, it's just the same as I guess my son right now, they're saying like, 'he's having a really hard time paying attention,' but if he's not interested in what you're talking about then he's not going to pay attention (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When people were forced to take classes that did not interest them then it was natural that they did not pay attention. Claire believed that it was up to the teachers to make the subject matter interesting enough to keep the students autonomously engaged.

Relatedness. The third innate psychological need was relatedness (Deci et al., 1991). Claire was able to develop connections with others at PCC despite being a typical commuter student who spent minimal time on campus. "I'm just here to do what I have to do and then I'm like, okay, bye" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Some of her strongest relationships were with her instructors. There was one instructor who Claire especially liked because he had a knack for making the subject matter fun. There was another instructor who intrigued Claire because he did everything in his power to engage the students. Then, there was the instructor who allowed Claire to bring her daughter to class when there was a mix up with the nurses. Claire was grateful for instructors who were sensitive to her needs. Yet, the one instructor most relevant to her was the Hawaiian Studies instructor. As a part Native Hawaiian student, Claire was deeply moved when the instructor taught the class about the historical plight of Native Hawaiians trying to preserve their native language.

> Only because you're like raised here, like you don't speak the language but you hear all these things that happened prior and you never realized that it was that hard of a struggle for things like Pūnana Leo, for things like the Hawaiian language and the reason not a lot of people talk it at all and all of those things. And hearing all those things, just kind of gets your blood boiling, you know . . . Being raised here and not, you know, them not offering more Hawaiian studies in high schools as you grow up and now you know why. You know what I mean. Now you know why because technically it wasn't even allowed (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Claire felt a sense of connection with this one particular instructor because of who he was as a person, what he stood for, and for the knowledge that he shared with her about the "history

of where we [were] and what we were" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). He left her with a haunting message that she was never too old to learn Hawaiian.

Claire was also able to relate to her peers. She was not just part of an information network, but was the center of her own information network. She was the source of information for many younger students in her classes who wanted tips about an exam, reminders about assignments, or notes from a lecture. Her classmates, especially the new students, benefited because they were kept in the loop about school. She said that she did not go as far as revealing any of the test questions but she did give them an overview of what to expect when they took the exam at the testing center.

> Okay be ready for that test cause you guys need, it's super, it was kind of broad questions so you needed to like, take in notes so that you can exact places in, rather than, cause otherwise the way you're going to answer is so broad that you'll, like you could put it in one sentence but you need like all your backup right . . . So, I was like "I hope you guys, you guys gotta take in notes." Hopefully we all paid attention in class and know what we were talking about so" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

When I asked her why she bothered, she replied, "I guess, yeah, I mean I don't, I don't like to see, you don't want to see anyone fail, right . . especially if you could have given some kind of input" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Claire believed that it was easy to make friends in college since most students were looking for study groups. Interestingly enough, as the hub of an information network, I assumed that Claire believed that a lot of her classmates cared about her, but that was not the case. Claire felt like she could trust her classmates but doubted if anyone really cared about her. She mentioned that she got along with one particular student in her Hawaiian Studies class, but then

later admitted that she just met this person the day before. Even though Claire did not feel like anyone truly cared about her in college, she seems to have enough support to meet her need for relatedness at PCC.

Identified regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci (2000a) asserted that identified regulation was an autonomous extrinsic motivation where individuals chose to perform an activity and were willing to accept responsibility for their own outcomes because they somewhat identified with the externally contingent value. In Claire's case, she persisted in college because she had somewhat identified and accepted the value of earning a college degree.

Claire decided to go to college after moving to O'ahu and working at a Waikiki restaurant for five years. Perhaps she was partly motivated by the fact that if she stayed in the restaurant industry, then she would have to continue working shift schedules. "I really enjoyed like waitressing, but also I can't do that cause it's just like, you're dead like two days after that, for just working an eight hour shift and running all over the place" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). As I mentioned before, she also tried taking on a day job in bookkeeping after her daughter started preschool, but found that it was too demanding with the amount of family obligations she had. Claire reflected upon her past history of schooling and knew that if she set her mind to getting a college degree her probability of accomplishing her goal was quite high. In brief, she may have partly bought into the external contingency of earning a college degree to get out of the restaurant industry.

In addition, Claire somewhat internalized the importance of a college degree because she was regulated by the external contingency to please others. In Claire's case, she especially wanted to please her mother. Her mother attended college for a while but did not complete the

degree requirements because she was unable to "understand these certain things" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Similarly, Claire's older sister attended college but dropped out. Claire imagined how happy her mother would be if she were able to graduate with a college degree. "[M]y mom would probably throw me a huge party and have all my family from the mainland come down" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Claire's strong desire to please others played a large part in her motivation to accomplish her academic goals.

> Well, I've done, I don't know. Worked in a restaurant for 14 years, tried to work as a bookkeeper and thought, "oh yeah, this is what I'm gonna do," and I was like no, this is not what I going to do. And as everybody's waiting for me to [graduate from college] so, I have to do it. You know. I don't like to disappoint people, so I gotta do it. I gotta do it for them and I gotta do it for me. And I gotta do it for my family. Because it will just make more sense in the long run once it's done (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

It was apparent that Claire was not in college just for the love of learning; hence, her motivation could not be classified as intrinsic motivation. In fact, she made it clear that she was not one of those people who just kept going to college. She was there to do what she needed to do, and to get what she wanted.

Integrated regulation as a type of extrinsic motivation. While earning a college degree was an identified regulation, learning about special education was an integrated regulation. The difference was that Claire would be sad but not totally devastated if she did not graduate from college. However, in the case of learning about special needs, Claire was not planning to stop. With or without the college's help, Claire was on a mission to learn as much as she could about assisting children with special needs. Claire was motivated to learn about the

possible obstacles that could hinder her daughter's development and to learn about ways to help her daughter become the best that she can be in life.

Claire's epiphany to become a special education preschool teacher came to her when she visited her daughter's preschool class, "and I was like, 'this is what I want to do, this is what I want to do'" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). Claire further explained why she wanted to go into this line of work.

> Cause it's what I do with my daughter, and when I walked into a classroom it's just like comfortable, like that's what I would want to do. And to be able to help kids to just develop what they could do cause I believe it's not about what it is, it's about what they can become from it. And every kid is different so… Whether it be challenging, it's like a constant challenge every year and a constant, like even if you have to repeat something to them, numerous, numerous and numerous times (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

At this point in her life, Claire wanted to find something that she enjoyed doing rather than work at a job just because it paid well. She reflected on how she made $45,000 as a bookkeeper, but was not happy. The good salary was not enough to keep her there. If she were to become a special education teacher, she knew that she would not make a lot of money but at least she would be able to find satisfaction in helping her students develop their communication skills and improve their interaction with people outside of the home. As a parent with a special needs child, she could identify with the other parents who were anxious about making the best decisions for their special needs child. She wanted to be their advocate.

Claire's enthusiasm about majoring in special education stemmed from her belief that this major was worth her time. Hence, she exhibited high levels of engagement, psychological well-

being, conceptual understanding of the subject matter, and persistence in achieving her goal. Despite having the appearance of being intrinsically motivated, her behavior did not merely stem from an interest in the subject; rather, she had chosen this major because it best fit her schedule and the needs of her family. "Cause then it works out for them too, their schedules and you know, even if I, when I become a teacher, just like the summers and all that. I don't have to worry about finding someone to watch them" (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

In conclusion, Claire was motivated to persist at PCC because her need for competence, autonomy and relatedness were being met at that college. She had an identified regulation when it came to attending college and an integrated regulation to major in special education.

Expectancy-Value Theory as a Basis for Analysis

While the self-determination theory focused on evaluating the students' three innate psychological needs to determine their level of motivation to persist in college, the expectancy-value theory looked at the students' future expectations to determine if they would persist in college.

Expectancy. According to Atkinson (1957), the strength of the individuals' motivation, vigor of their response, and degree of persistence were determined by their expectancy, incentive, and strength of motive. Claire's efficacy expectancy was the same as her outcome expectancy. That is, she believed that she could successfully perform in college in order to bring about the desired outcomes. More specifically, Claire expected that if she continued to study hard and earn good grades at PCC, then she would be able to transfer to GU and pursue a bachelor's degree in early childhood and special education. With a bachelor's degree, she expected to work for the DOE as a special education preschool teacher which in turn would have

allowed her to have the same school intermissions as her children. Moreover, Claire heard from her sister-in-law that she would be making a decent salary.

Claire partly derived her expectancy for success by comparing herself to the other students in her classes. She believed that what gave her an edge over her classmates was that she knew what the instructors expected and met their expectations. She read the assigned chapters, completed the assignments on time, and prepared for exams. Claire was amazed when she found out that a majority of her classmates did not do the assigned readings. This often forced the instructor to review the chapter instead of facilitate a class discussion as planned. Some of the incoming students were even more blatant about doing minimal work.

> Sometimes, like in class, when they're asking me, "oh do we really need the book," I'm like your homework for anthropology is to read the chapters, it's like 30 pages. You get to use the notes on your test. Obviously, this is your first year cause you have no idea how nice that is. You know, so. I mean, I would say like, yeah, you need the book, you need the book. Like you can't go on his PowerPoint and think that that's all that's going to happen. It's just not it (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

High self-efficacy. As a person with high self-efficacy, Claire believed that she had the cognitive ability and skills to accomplish her goals at PCC. She had no problems preserving long enough to achieve her goals. After all, she had already been at PCC for six years. Moreover, she tended to attribute past academic failures not to a lack of ability but to a lack of effort. This was the case when her GPA fell to below 2.0 in high school. When she encountered a setback, like when she was forced to take four developmental education courses, she concentrated her effort on mastering the challenge and earning high marks.

Claire was in the process of honing her skills and modifying her strategies to be successful. For example, one of her strategies to earn high marks was to gather as much information as she could about the instructors' expectations so that she could determine the minimum requirements for the course. Then, she went above and beyond the bare minimum to earn an A.

> I ask a lot of questions cause I, every teacher is different so some teachers don't want as much from you as other teachers want. You know, like some times you can do the bare minimum of what is needed which is what I don't like to do but if you just tell me what you, what the criteria is, and sometimes they just want you to like, just figure it out (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Her strategy worked in most instances, but it also was a source of disappointment when she spent time doing extra work but failed to meet the minimum requirements. For instance, in her web design class, in spite of doing more than what was expected for her final project, Claire got a B for the course. "[I]t wasn't bare minimum, it's just like, I felt like I think, maybe I didn't need to add as much detail as I thought I needed to add or uhm, things like that (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Claire concluded that although the other students' websites were bare minimum and plain compared to hers, she got a lower grade because she did not understand what the instructor expected. In another instance, Claire did more than was required of the students for a book review in hopes of earning an A for the assignment.

> So I did that but it was more complicated so mine was more difficult than everyone else's. So that's why I probably got a B because I made mine more difficult so I had a harder time with it. So, that was about it though. But, I think that they said it was, she said it was probably the most creative. And all my classmates were like, "oh, that was

like way more work for yourself, than…" But I didn't know (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Once again, Claire concluded that the other students' book reviews were not as creative as hers, but she got a lower grade because she did not understand the assignment. Despite these unexpected outcomes, for the most part, Claire's dedication to go above and beyond what was required resulted in high marks.

Claire revealed that the most anxiety she ever experienced was when she found out about her daughter's condition. In comparison, everything else seems minor. It was not to say that Claire was immune to experiencing moments of test anxieties. She managed them by breathing deeply and doing self-talk.

> That's why when I really reading the test yesterday, I was like, "oh, my God," like I don't know any of this. And then I just had to like, I was like, "okay, deep breath." And I looked back down. I was like pick three questions, start from there, you know. So I picked three questions, "okay, work on your first question, go from there, work on your second question, go from there" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Low self-efficacy. Although Claire could be classified as someone with high self-efficacy, when it came to academics, there was a specific domain where she experienced low self-efficacy—writing. Interestingly, Claire did not struggle with writing in high school. Her low self-efficacy seems to have developed in college when an instructor told her that she had to work on her writing skills. "She's like you write like how you talk. She's like, so you have all these ideas but you're not organized in your ideas" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). What made matters worse was that Claire always struggled with commas and spelling. Thus, when she described her feeling about English, she said, "I can't stand English. I hate that"

(personal communication, February 18, 2016). Her low self-efficacy in writing spilled over into her ability to perform well on essay exams.

> So I think it depends on the type of test and I was, I mean, yesterday, for me a writing test like that was, was rough. I'm horrible at writing, but. Also just like organizing ideas and stuff. That's more hard than me just telling you like what, like I could just tell you that (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Incentives and values. In Claire's case, there was a positive, not an inverse relationship between expectancy and value. The goal of earning a degree in special education was appealing because she valued the idea of teaching special needs children how to communicate with others around them. It would better equip Claire to help children like her daughter become the best that they could be. The best part about this endeavor was that Claire believed that she had what it took to achieve the academic goal.

Cost value. Claire had already quit her job when she decided to return to PCC in 2016 after a year-and-a-half hiatus so work was not an opportunity she had to forgo. Furthermore, she was "not one to sit at home and not do anything" (personal communication, February 25, 2016); therefore, taking classes was a good way for her to spend her time. The only thing she had to give up to go to college was the time she usually spent with family and friends.

Attainment value. Claire believed that she was competent in learning new information. She just needed to prove it to others. She did a good job in high school when she returned to classes in her senior year to bring her GPA up to over 2.0 so that she could graduate with the rest of her class. Her ability to bounce back after a year of poor grades publicly confirmed her competence. "I was always like decent, like I would do my stuff but I think my junior year was the one where I just was like over it" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). As a

college student, Claire displayed her competency by maintaining a 3.88 cumulative GPA. She got upset when she got a B for web design, while "everyone in [her] family was like, 'it's a B,' and I was like, 'I don't care, it brings my grade point average down'" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Intrinsic value. Much of Claire's intrinsic interest was covered under my discussion of the self-determination Theory. Claire never seems to have had a genuine interest in nursing aside from going into a profession where she could help others. Therefore, it was not surprising that she stopped taking the prerequisites for nursing even before the birth of her daughter. She further justified her change of heart after spending a year in the hospital caring for her daughter. She saw what a nurse's life was like. Claire knew that she could not handle working 12 hour days caring for other people's children, knowing very well that she had two children at home who needed her attention.

After the daughter's diagnosis, Claire became interested in pursuing special education to learn about "every kid's different needs" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). There were several classes that Claire found especially interesting such as the music class where she learned about incorporating sounds, pitches, rhythm and music into the classroom routine. It was a novel idea to use an audible sound or music to notify the students when it was time to do a particular activity. "I think it just helps like okay, they hear, you know, they hear this song. Okay this is what they got to do. They hear this thing, this is what they got to do" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). After spending six years in college, Claire was finally sure about what major to pursue.

Utility value. Claire admitted that she had to push through many uninteresting assignments and readings. "But, in my sense, because I know I have to pass, you know, even as

boring as it is for some things, like for reading I fall asleep like three times while reading. I don't even need to be tired, but it's just the reading is like, uhh" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Furthermore, there were a couple of prerequisite courses that seem irrelevant to education but necessary to earn a degree. Claire persisted, knowing that these classes were a means to an end.

Motive. Besides expectancy and incentive, the third factor in Atkinson's (1957) expectancy-value theory was motive. It concerned the individual's drive to achieve success or to avoid failure. In Claire's case, she was striving to achieve success in college. She was realistic about the majors she could pursue given her family obligations. She took courses of intermediate difficulty, nothing too hard or too easy. The most challenging course she took was an online web design class where she earned a B. Getting a B was not a major setback, but it did prove that the course was an optimal challenge. She was drawn to the course because she thought that she could earn an A if she put enough effort into it. After all, she was used to doing detailed work using spreadsheets. The problem was that it was more like learning a new language rather than creating a spreadsheet. "It's all that little language, little language, in the left, to the right, and the, you know, brackets and all of that. And the codes, it's like, uhh, it's a lot of information" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). When I asked Clare what she could have done differently, she replied that she could have asked the instructor more questions even if it was via email. She also thought that she would have done better if it were a regular class, where she could have met with the instructor and other students in person. "I'm such a people person, I think it was hard, like it's easier for me to like meet somebody and kind of like, okay, like ask questions that way than to like, type and wait" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In conclusion, it was Claire's expectancy for success, incentive to pursue a major she deemed important, and motive to achieve success that strengthened her motivation to vigorously engage in her schoolwork and persist at a community college. The only problem I foresee is when Claire is expected to transfer to GU to complete her bachelor's degree in early childhood and special education. Would she be able to manage a more demanding curriculum, her children's ongoing needs, and the commute to a campus much farther away? At that point, her outcome expectancy may not match her efficacy expectancy; in other words, what she expects to be a particular consequence tied to a particular act will not hold true in her situation. She will need to take into consideration her particular situation and what acts she will be able to do to bring about the desired outcomes.

Attribution Theory as a Basis for Analysis

One of the things that set Weiner (1986) apart from Atkinson (1957) was his focus on historical causal relationships. Weiner theorized that motivation was initiated and regulated by the person's emotions, causal antecedents, causal ascriptions, causal dimensions, and psychological and behavior consequences.

In Claire's case, there was one positive outcome that stood out in her college experience. She was extremely happy when she earned good grades in college math, considering her dreadful personal history with math. When she was in high school, every year she would flunk math and be forced to retake it in the summer just to move up to the next grade level. She went as far as Algebra 2 in high school. The reason Claire hated math so much was because she did not understand the material. She also said that she had horrible math teachers during the regular school year. In the summer, things were somehow different and Claire understood what the instructors were trying to teach her. Perhaps they hired different teachers to teach in the summer

or used a different curriculum. It was not clear why summer math was any better. In any case, Claire seems to fall into the category of students with a hedonic bias. She blamed others for her setbacks and failures, but at the same time accepted credit for her personal success. In this case, it was her high school math teachers' fault that she failed math every year, but it was due to her efforts that she passed college math at PCC.

One thing that changed in college that could have affected Claire's success in math was her desire to pass because she had to pay for classes. If she did not pass the required course the first time, then she would have to pay for the same course again. "I didn't pass math any grade, right, in high school, but when I came here, I was able to do it. Because I want to do it and you need to do it rather than you don't want to do it (personal communication, February 25, 2016). What made her want to do it? The cost of tuition. "To me it's like paying for this, you better learn it, you know" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). It was also the reason why Claire did not like earning anything less than an A. She summed it up by saying: "Now it's like I don't want to get anything below an A because that's irritating. Cause I have to pay for this so I better get an A" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). It was interesting that because she had to pay for the classes, she was inspired to do well.

Another factor that played a role in Claire doing well in college math was her previous job as a bookkeeper for a restaurant in Waikiki. Learning how to keep an ongoing financial record of transactions for a successful business changed her self-image. She identified as an accountant, although bookkeeper would be a more accurate description. "I was horrible at math, and I always said, 'oh, I was horrible at math, horrible at math,' but then I became an accountant so how can I be that horrible at math" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). As a bookkeeper, Claire had no choice but to question her belief that she would continue to fail in

math. She was persuaded by her new identity to put in more time and effort into her college math classes. "Math and that was a lot of repeat, repeat, repeat. Like 45 questions of whatever you just learned so I guess that just kind of filters in on your brain" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Hence, the locus of causality of Claire's success in college math was internal, unstable, and controllable; it was for the most part due to effort. Claire acknowledged that. "Learning something new would require effort just because I feel like with effort is where you are gonna get your intelligence" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Yet, Claire did not entirely dismiss the internal causality of ability as playing a role in her success. "I have that mathematical, logical, that's how my brain does work" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). In a period of two interviews, it was interesting to hear Claire describe her evolution from a high school student, who not only hated math but flunked math every year, to a college student who earned As in math and identified as someone with a mathematical, logical brain.

In addition to the one positive outcome that stood out, there was one unexpected outcome that could be considered a setback to Claire's ability to achieve her academic goals. It had to do with her daughter's condition. When I asked Claire the general interview question about having a family member with health issues who could distract her from school, Claire corrected me and said that her daughter did not take her attention away from school. Claire had learned to care for her daughter while continuing to progress in college. "I just read to her all what I'm learning. Yeah, that's what I used to do before, just sit there and read to her" (personal communication, February 18, 2016). Claire seems to be adapting to her situation by taking things in stride. Along the way, she was fortunate to have the opportunity to observe and learn from role models such as the hospital nurses and special education teachers. Claire was especially impressed with

her daughter's teacher. Weiner (1986) referred to other people as external, unstable, uncontrollable attributes who could make a difference in the individual's situation.

> [My daughter] is the only one in a wheelchair in that school so it's for, when she first went, all the kids were like, "oh, why is she in a wheelchair," like, "what's wrong," stuff like that. But now like all of them love her. They all want to push her, they all want to help her dry her mouth and drool. It's awesome (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

In contrast to the conducive environment created by her daughter's teacher, Claire also had to contend with the adverse environment created by her son's friends and their parents. They too were external, unstable, uncontrollable attributes who made a difference in Claire's situation.

> I don't know, like honestly, I seriously want to slap some of those kids. Cause they just, and even some parents, like when we have to go to stuff. They just stare and you're just like, "you can ask a question or you can turn around." You know. Just do it. Just get it over with if it's going to make you stop staring (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Claire took an imposed uncontrollable environment where the reason for the situation was external, stable, and uncontrollable and used her human agency to proactively respond. There were no causal antecedents to explain the situation. It seems like getting a bachelor's degree in special education was just one way to proactively improve Claire's possibilities for a positive outcome in an imposed environment.

In conclusion, both positive and unexpected outcomes motivated Claire to persist at a community college. On one hand, Claire attributed her success in math classes to the amount of

effort she exerted. That meant that in the future Claire would continue to do well in math as long as she exerted enough effort. By the same token, she knew that if she failed a math test then it was probably because she did not study enough. It could no longer be attributed to a past history of always being been bad at math. The unexpected outcome of her daughter's health also motivated Claire to persist at PCC. Claire was doing her best to take control of the situation so that it would lead to favorable future results.

Self-Theory as a Basis for Analysis

Dweck (2006) asserted that each person has a both a fixed and growth mindset. This seems to be the case for Claire. When I asked Claire whether she believed that intelligence or ability could be significantly changed throughout one's lifetime, she replied, "The mind is an always changing thing and you never know what, what they pick up and what they don't pick up" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Claire's decision to first enter college at 23 years old was a manifestation of her belief that intelligence could be developed throughout one's lifetime. She was not afraid of taking risks and mastering challenges. Moreover, she was not ashamed of making mistakes in front of others since she saw it as a natural part of learning.

> The other day I said the word, mariners [mispronounced] instead of mariners. I was like mariners [mispronounced] and all, everybody started laughing. Well, I've learned a new word today in, I told our whole class after our presentation. It's like I learned a new word today, it's mariners, not mariners [mispronounced]. I was like I was just sounding it out. (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

On the other hand, there was evident that Claire had a fixed mindset. Perhaps it stemmed from her mother's characterization of Claire as the good child or a reaction to her rebellious older sister. In any case, Claire put a lot of pressure on herself to live up to her family's

expectations. In order to maintain a label of success, Claire was obsessed with earning straight As. She ran the risk of losing this title if she were to let down her guards and encounter a setback or failure. Furthermore, Dweck (2006) said that people with fixed mindsets thought that traits are permanent throughout one's lifetime. During the interview, there was some evidence that Claire perceived traits as permanent.

> I think [Jen] is, she is more artistic, she's very artistic. And she's really talented. She just doesn't, she's not motivated. I'm the opposite. I am not artistic, but I'm highly motivated to like, I'm motivated to make people proud, and I don't like letting people down (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

Claire defined herself in black and white terms. She was not good at drawing, not musically inclined, not a good web designer, not a good writer, but highly motivated to not disappoint others.

According to Dweck (1975), what promoted a fixed mindset was repeatedly hearing intelligence praise and trait praises. Claire's mother clearly provided Claire with such feedback not to harm her but to encourage her to do well in college. Claire's mother reminded Claire that she was the golden child in the family.

> I mean she was just like amazed with like the first, from then until now, it's just like going to school. She's like, "oh, you're doing so good." You know, she tried like going back to school, and she was like I couldn't you know grasp, and I didn't understand these certain things. Uhm, and so she's like really happy with me going to school (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In contrast to constantly receiving praises at home, Claire said that she rarely received any positive feedback at PCC. In fact, she could only recall receiving positive feedback from

one instructor. She relied on her grades to inform her about her progress. I wondered if a lack of positive feedback from instructors, especially a lack of effort praises and strategy praises contributed to Claire holding on to a fixed mindset.

In conclusion, Claire had a combination of a growth and fixed mindset, which was not uncommon. In part, Claire believed and acted upon her belief that intelligence was developed throughout one's lifetime. At the same time, she pressured herself into maintaining a perfect GPA in order to fulfill the label of being the golden child in her family.

Closing Comments

When I asked Claire what caused students to drop out of college, she replied, "Priorities, family, it just depends I think on the person" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Claire elaborated that some students dropped out because of family obligations or financial problems, while others dropped out because they "just want to party and stuff" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). Her advice to prospective college students was: "you should just go to college when you want to go to college, like when you're ready for it" (personal communication, February 25, 2016). She also warned them to pace themselves and not overload themselves. Claire advised against taking 15 credits unless they lived with their parents, did not have to work, and had no other obligations. "Yeah, I don't think that 15 [credits] is realistic unless you're a super determined kid that wants to go and your parents don't need you to work" (personal communication, February 25, 2016).

In Claire's case, she was determined to graduate from PCC because she wanted to make her family proud, especially her mother. Claire would have been the first in her family to graduate from college. She also wanted to show people that it was possible to work, raise a family, and go to college all at that same time. She wanted to disprove the myth that you could

only play one role at a time. Claire also revealed that she would be so pleased with herself if she could graduate with a bachelor's degree in early childhood and special education. Her college degree would be proof that she had what it took to overcome the obstacles and actually achieve her academic goals.

CHAPTER 7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The objective of this study was to address the research question: What role does motivation play in a student's decision to persist at a community college in Hawai'i? I addressed this question in detail in five case studies. In this chapter, I pointed out the similarities and differences among the participants, as well as commented on the motivation theories and concepts, and retention models.

Motivation Theories and Concepts

Maslow's Hierarchy

Maslow's (1970) hierarchy was key in understanding how motivation influenced the participants' decision to persist in college. It seems as though attending college was one way for individuals to meet their higher needs, that is, their need for self-esteem and self-actualization. However, when a lower need was no longer being met, participants shifted the focus away from their higher needs in order to address their lower need.

Such was the case for Lori who had every intention of going to college right after high school but had to drop out because meeting her physiological needs were more pressing. Eleanor was in a similar position when she fled to the mainland with her two young children. At that point in her life she had no time for college since she was the sole provider for their physiological needs. Sometimes, it was not the participants' physiological needs (i.e., hunger, thirst, sex), but rather their need for safety that took priority. This was the case for Eleanor before she moved to the mainland. She had no other choice but to take drastic measures to the secure the safety of herself and her two young children.

The need for safety includes not only one's physical safety but also one's need to be free from threatening health issues. In Claire's case, once she found out about her daughter's rare

brain disorder in 2012, she immediately dropped out of college to care for her daughter's needs. It was not until she could establish a workable routine for her family, did she dare to think about returning to college once again. Even Abigail skipped class when her mother had open-heart surgery. She said that she could not concentrate on school when her mother's health was in jeopardy.

In fact, out of the five participants I interviewed, Paula was the only one who did not drop out or skip class in order to address a physiological need or the need for safety. She was however, placed on academic probation and later suspended for failing to meet the college's academic standards when she decided put her lower need for love and belonging above her higher need for esteem and self-actualization. When I met her, Paula was still trying to satisfy her need for love and belonging by choosing a major she knew that would please her mother. In fact, the desire to please one's parent(s) seems to be a common theme among several of the participants. Abigail was another participant who had chosen a major based on what would most likely please her parents. It was also the motivation for Claire to earn a college degree since she knew how proud her mother would be if she did.

Once the participants' lower needs were at least partially met, they proved themselves capable of fulfilling their higher need for esteem. For these participants, it was not their first time that they felt confident about their academic progress. With the exception of Claire, four of the participants were able to maintain a 3.0 or better GPA in high school. Claire was the only one who let her GPA slip to below 2.0. Yet, she had the capacity to bring her GPA back up within a year so that she could graduate with the rest of her class.

As I analyzed the data using Maslow's (1970) hierarchy, my assumption was that individuals would go to college only if all of their lower needs were at least partially met. While

that seems to be true, it was also the case that individuals were motivated to earn a college degree to further meet their lower needs. If these participants were able to achieve their academic and career goals, then they would be in a better position to afford the necessities in life (physiological needs), to attain financial security (need for safety), and in many cases, to please a loved one (need for love and belonging).

Self-Determination Theory

Although both Maslow's (1970) hierarchy and the self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991) were humanistic approaches to motivation, the self-determination theory was different from Maslow's hierarchy because it explained motivation in terms of individuals being drawn to engage in activities, relationships, and contexts in the present moment to meet their need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy. It focused on whether or not the individuals' needs were currently being met in that particular context at that specific time. In the context of higher education, the self-determination theory did not require students to first fulfill their lower needs before they were able to focus on college as a means to meet their higher needs. The self-determination theory implied that the students' decision to persist at a community college depended on whether their needs were being met at that particular community college. In other words, the theory was centered on the students' present situation.

All five of the participants' need for competence was being met at the community colleges they were attending. Their ability to maintain a high cumulative GPA, which ranged from 3.4 to 4.0, attested to their high level of competency. It was also important to note that completing the series of developmental education classes did not hold any of the participants back. Furthermore, all of the participants except for Abigail felt like they were being optimally challenged at the college they were attending. Although Abigail felt like the classes were too

easy, she admitted that she was still being optimally challenged because of her deficiencies in academic English.

As for the participants' need for autonomy, they were all in control over their college experience. For example, they chose which community college to attend and how many credits to take. They were also in control over their decision to transfer to a four-year institution or not. Another interesting discovery was that participants who grew up in single parent households such as Lori, Paula, and Claire were forced to become autonomous from a young age. Having autonomy did not necessarily mean that they were brought up in an ideal autonomy-supportive environment where parents encouraged them to explore different career paths so that they could make the best choices for themselves. The single parents of the participants in the case studies were typically too busy working. Without much parental support and encouragement, these participants explored and defined their own interests. Hence, when it came to choosing their own majors, it was not surprising that Claire and Lori were not influenced by their mothers. Paula, on the other hand, was highly influenced by her mother when choosing a major. Eleanor, who did not grow up in a single-parent household but did have an autonomy-supportive environment also took charge of her own future career. As for Abigail, as I mentioned before, she was less autonomous in choosing her own career path.

Another innate psychological need was the need for relatedness (Deci et al., 1991). All of the participants were commuter students with family obligations or work obligations outside of school. Yet, each participant was able to develop relationships with at least one instructor and one classmate. Two students, Lori and Paula, worked on campus and made the most connections with peers, administrators, instructors, and staff members. There was no doubt that their need for relatedness was being met. As for Claire and Eleanor, they too had developed relationships

with peers and instructors on campus but these relationships were not intimate. They considered their peers as acquaintances rather than friends. This was enough to satisfy their need for relatedness. Then there was Abigail who formed a deep friendship with one classmate and felt connected to one instructor. This was also enough to meet her need for relatedness.

The self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991) stated that the individuals' type of motivation was determined by the degree to which the individuals' innate psychological needs were being met in that particular context. Even though all of the participants' needs were being met to some degree at their respective community colleges, I cannot say that any of them were intrinsically motivated to attend college. They were not in higher education to satisfy a curiosity; it was a means to an end. Three of them (Abigail, Lori, Eleanor) internalized the value of college to the point of integrated regulation, which was a type of extrinsic motivation most closely resembling intrinsic motivation. The other two participants' (Paula, Claire) type of extrinsic motivation could be classified as identified regulation. Both types of regulations were considered to be autonomous extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Students with autonomous extrinsic motivation were characterized as having higher levels of academic achievement and persistence.

In terms of the participants' choices of majors, once again I cannot say that any them were intrinsically motivated to pursue a particular major. It may be too idealistic to say that students were in college to learn about a specific subject because gaining knowledge in itself was rewarding. Claire, Lori, and Abigail had internalized the value of their major into their own sets of values and beliefs; their type of extrinsic motivation for their majors could be classified as integrated regulation. Paula's type of motivation for her career was introjected regulation; that

is, she had somewhat internalized the value of nursing but did not truly accept it as her own value.

In brief, the five participants I interviewed were genuinely interested in learning their subject matter; however, make no mistake about it, they were extrinsically motivated to persist in college and to earn a degree in their chosen majors.

Expectancy-Value Theory

One of the ways that the expectancy-value theory differed from Maslow's (1970) hierarchy and the self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991) was that it focused on the students' future goals as the reason for their decision to persist at a community college. Students were motivated to persist in college because they expected that it would bring about future rewards.

Interestingly enough, extrinsic motivation as defined by the self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991) was connected to the idea of expectations that the expectancy-value theory described. That is, individuals were said to be extrinsically motivated when they expected specific external consequences to occur if they did certain acts in a particular situation. This very explanation of extrinsic motivation could also be used to describe the participants' outcome expectancy. In fact, the five participants I interviewed believed that if they studied, they could expect to earn good grades, earn an associate's degree and/or transfer to a four-year institution into the program of their choice. Once they were in a four-year institution, they expected to earn a bachelor's degree, qualify for a position in their field, achieve financial security, and live a relatively comfortable life in Hawai‘i. Their expectations were built on external rewards.

However, three of the five participants had to adjust their outcome expectancies to accommodate for their particular situation. For example, after immigrating to the U.S., Abigail's

efficacy expectancy as a non-native English speaker attending college in the U.S. was to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing, become licensed, work in a hospital and save enough money to go back to the Philippines to pursue a medical degree. This was not her original outcome expectancy. In Eleanor's case, her outcome expectancy to become a doctor was modified when she got involved with an abusive partner and gave birth to two children. At that point, she thought she would pursue nursing. In her current situation, Eleanor's efficacy expectancy was to major in education, counseling or dental hygiene. It was what she believed she could personally do at this time in her life in her current situation to bring about a desirable outcome. Claire's outcome expectancy to become a nurse or physical therapist changed when her daughter was diagnosed with a disorder. Claire's current efficacy expectation to become a special education preschool teacher was based on what she believed she had the ability to do at this point in her life given her current situation.

Besides expectations, the expectancy-value theory stated that motivation was influenced by incentive and values. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) defined incentive as a positive relationship between expectancy and value. This deviated from Atkinson's (1957) notion of incentive. He proposed an inverse relationship between expectancy and value where individuals placed a higher value on success when the task was difficult and the probability of success was low. I examined the participants' data and found that all of them wanted to earn not only an associate degree but also a bachelor's degree because they placed value on a college degree and believed that they could do it. This reflected a positive relationship between expectancy and value. However, when it came to choosing majors, three of the five participants (i.e., Abigail, Paula, Lori) took pride in becoming prospective members of prestigious fields. Perhaps this was evidence that there also was an inverse relationship between expectancy and value.

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) expanded on Atkinson's (1957) concept of values to include utility value, cost value, attainment value, and intrinsic value. The five participants understood the concept of utility value -- they knew they had to sacrifice in the present time in order to attain a long-term rewarding goal. The most common opportunity cost cited was not being able to work as many hours as they did when they were not in school. They also sacrificed spending time with their family members. This was especially true for those who had children. I also found that the participants' significant other, whether they were boyfriends or husbands, also had to make sacrifices in order for the participants to continue their academic endeavors.

Another commonality was how participants placed attainment value on performance in order to outwardly display how competent they perceived themselves to be. Three of them (i.e., Lori, Paula, Eleanor) were out to prove that they belonged in college since they had a past history of dropping out. Abigail wanted to prove that she could excel at an American college and still pursue medicine. As for Eleanor, she had a bone to pick with her first counselor.

Still another commonality was that all of them were intrinsically interested in helping others. This is what drove them to pursue specific majors. They had gone through some kind of hardship in life which caused them to empathize with others. For example, Abigail said that she was inspired to help sick people get better. Claire stated that she wanted to help children with special needs, and Lori said that she wanted to provide patients with a comfortable experience at the dental office.

The last factor I examined was motive. It was a challenge to determine whether the participants' motive was to strive to achieve success or to strive to avoid failure. I concluded that the five participants were striving to achieve success when it came to earning a college degree. One of the features of those striving to achieve success was to engage in challenging

activities just above their comfort zone. Perhaps, this was one of the reasons why these participants chose to attend a community college instead of a four-year institution. Since the tuition for community colleges was relatively low compared to the tuition for four-year institutions, it was less intimidating to explore various majors and determine if they were college ready. It was also less expensive to complete all of their general education courses at a community college. There was not one participant I interviewed who felt like she was incapable of handling schoolwork at the community college level. In fact, all of them were all at a community college for its academic-transfer function; that is, they all planned to transfer to a four-year institution.

The expectancy-value theory was an important theory to include when evaluating the participants' decision to persist because it was future-oriented. The limitation of using Maslow's (1970) hierarchy was that there were other ways to satisfy one's need for esteem or self-actualization. Students did not have to persist in college in order to satisfy their higher needs. They could satisfy their higher needs by working at job they enjoy. As for the self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991), since earning a degree was a long drawn out endeavor, there could be times when students did not feel competent, autonomous, or a sense of relatedness in college. In fact, they could feel like giving in to the external pressures of life (e.g., family obligations, work obligations) and dropping out of school. After all, three innate psychological needs could be met elsewhere such as at the workplace. What the expectancy-value theory did was to fill in the gaps where the humanistic approaches fell short. The expectancy-value theory explained how expectations, incentives, and motives inspired students to persist long enough in college to achieve their academic goals.

Attribution Theory

The strength of the attribution theory lay in its ability to explain why some students persisted even after they failed while others gave up. Students who attributed failures to internal, stable, uncontrollable attributes (i.e., ability) will not exert effort the next time around since their actions and responses made no difference in their outcomes. It was what Seligman and Maier (1967) referred to as learned helplessness. Moreover, students who attributed failures and setbacks to external, stable, uncontrollable attributes will not exert effort to do something about the external factor since it is out of their control. Instead they will focus on how they must react in an imposed environment.

Students may try to make changes to the external factor if they perceive the cause as unstable. This was the case for Lori, Paula, and Eleanor when they dropped out of college the first time. Their commonality was that they attributed their negative outcome to external, unstable factors. Since the cause of their issue could be changed or eliminated, they were hopeful about achieving their postsecondary academic endeavors in the future. Lori knew that she could qualify for financial aid when she turned 24 years old. As for Paula and Eleanor, once their partners were out of the picture, they were confident that they could succeed in college.

In terms of positive affective outcomes, all five participants who attributed the cause of their academic success to their effort, continued to exert much effort. They prided themselves in knowing what the instructors wanted and were able to meet their instructors' expectations. These five participants acknowledged that the amount of effort they put into their assignments and exam preparation was what separated them from their classmates.

As helpful as Weiner's (1986) attribution theory was by itself in explaining the role that motivation played in the student's decision to persist, the theory was even more effective when

combined with Atkinson's (1957) expectancy-value theory. As I mentioned before, Atkinson was Weiner's mentor at the University of Michigan. Hence, Weiner knew the expectancy-value theory well. That was why I was surprised to see such completely different theories. While I used the attribution theory as a framework to analyze the five case studies, I continuously asked myself how was Weiner's theory connected to Atkinson's theory. Finally, it dawned on me that Weiner's theory was actually an expansion or a missing piece of Atkinson's theory. What I mean is Atkinson's theory of motivation was based on the individuals' expectancy, incentives and motive. The question that Atkinson failed to answer was how did individuals come up with their expectancies, incentives, and motives? Weiner answered that question. When Atkinson's expectancy-value theory was combined with Weiner's attribution theory as well as the modifications made by Eccles and Wigfield (2002), then the whole picture came together.

As Atkinson (1957) pointed out, individuals began with an outcome expectancy; in other words, they had an expectancy based on the probability that in a particular situation certain acts would bring about specific consequences. It was a general outcome expectancy. However, while individuals attempted to achieve their outcome expectancy, they ran into what Weiner (2010) called negative and unexpected affective outcomes. When they encountered these outcomes, Weiner suggested that these individuals stopped to assess what went wrong especially when they were unexpected. Once the cause of the outcome was determined, individual modified their expectancy to what Eccles and Wigfield (2002) called efficacy expectancy. Individuals revised their expectancy in a specific domain to determine what particular acts they had the ability to personally perform that would bring about a desirable outcome. Their expectancy was no longer a general outcome expectancy, but something that was more in line with their personal situation.

Past positive outcomes and past negative or unexpected outcomes also shaped the individuals' incentive and motives. In terms of incentives, it shaped the individuals' perception of their probability of success. Moreover, past outcomes and their affects influenced the individuals' motive by shaping the individuals' decision to strive to achieve success or strive to avoid failure in order to minimize future pain, shame and humiliation.

The attribution theory brought to light that Atkinson's (1957) concepts of expectancy, incentive, and motives were not to be seen as something that individuals conjured up at one point in time; rather it was developed during a longer process. Past personal experiences left emotional memories in the individuals' mind that affected their cognition and future behavior. When this concept was applied to community college students and their decision to persist in school, then it was clear that their expectancy, incentives, and motives were shaped by all of their previous positive outcomes dependent affects, negative outcomes dependent affects, and what they attributed as the causes for these outcomes. Thus, it was useful to have conducted a life history research study.

For example, there were several participants who initially wanted to become doctors. Abigail ultimately wanted to become a medical doctor and Lori dreamt of becoming a surgeon. Becoming a doctor was an outcome expectancy. This was true especially for Abigail since she was on the premed track in the Philippines. However, once she immigrated to the U.S., she was faced with language barriers at the college level and the realities of paying for medical school in the U.S. Abigail's unexpected move to the U.S. forced her to modify her outcome expectancy. Her current efficacy expectancy was to become a nurse. As for Lori, she once thought about becoming a surgeon but saw her opportunity slip away as the years passed while she worked and waited to qualify for financial aid on her own. At the age of 24, when Lori could finally apply

for financial aid by herself, she found herself in a very different situation with two children. The negative unexpected outcome of not being able to attend college when she first graduated from high school was an external, stable, uncontrollable attribute. Lori had no choice but to revise her outcome expectancy to fit her current situation. Her efficacy expectancy was to pursue a career in dental hygiene.

In the case of Eleanor, once she found out how the quality of patient care was influenced by health insurance coverage, she no longer wanted become a nurse. Yet becoming a nurse was not her original outcome expectancy. It was to become a doctor. Her expectancy changed when she unexpectedly had two children after graduating from high school. Her most recent efficacy expectancy was to become a teacher, counselor or dental hygienist.

In brief, the attribution theory allowed me to better understand how the participants' efficacy expectancies evolved from their original outcome expectancies.

Self-Theory

Dweck's (1975) self-theory stemmed from Weiner's (1986) causal ascription of effort and abilities. Individuals who believed that intelligence was fixed, attributed success and failures to inherited levels of intelligence and skills. People with fixed mindset alleged that the individuals' abilities and skills could not be changed. In comparison, those who believed that intelligence was malleable attributed success and failure to the amount of effort individuals exerted and the strategies they selected for the given tasks. They believed that learning was a lifelong process.

All of the participants that I interviewed except for Paula exhibited a combination of a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. Paula was the only participant without a fixed mindset. The other four participants with fixed mindsets expressed the urgency to get straight As. Abigail

said that she strived for As because she liked getting praises from her parents. Dweck (1975) pointed out that individuals with an addiction to intelligence praises strived to maintain a level of success by proving themselves over and over again. It was important to note that Abigail needed an excellent GPA to get accepted into the competitive nursing program at GU. Lori, may or may not have had a fixed mindset but she did work hard to maintain a 4.0 GPA so that she could have a fighting chance of getting into the competitive dental hygiene program at GU.

Surprisingly, Claire, the participant who almost did not graduate with her high school class, also felt an urgency to get straight As. She expressed how irritated she was when she earned anything lower than an A. This pressure to maintain a label of success could have stemmed from trying to live up to her mother's image of her being the golden child in the family. Eleanor was very similar to the other three participants in the sense that she puts a lot of pressure on herself to get perfect scores. Like Claire, she could have been trying to live up to her parents' image of her being a good daughter and good student or perhaps she wanted to prove to herself and to the counselor at PCC that she could handle college level work even with all of her other responsibilities.

The only participant not bothered by a less than perfect GPA was Paula. Of the five participants, Paula had the lowest cumulative GPA. Paula tried her best to balance working 45 hours a week and schoolwork. She definitely had a growth mindset. She admitted that she was not afraid of failure; she welcomed it as a part of learning.

The other four participants also had a growth mindset in addition to their fixed mindset when it came to academics. According to Dweck (2006), having a combination of mindsets was common. Claire succinctly summed it up when she referred to the mind as an always changing thing. The other three participants, that is Abigail, Lori, and Eleanor, explained how they

believed that genetics played a part in intelligence but effort played an even greater role in intelligence.

All five of the participants received effort praises from family members or instructors but only three of them received strategy praises from instructors. It seems as though family members did not tend to comment about the individuals' selection of strategy when it came to academics. Only two participants received intelligence and trait praises: Abigail and Claire. Eleanor received only trait praises. Trait praises and intelligence praises were commonly uttered by family members such as their mother, father, or siblings. On the other hand, there seems to be no examples of college instructors giving intelligence praises or trait praises to the participants. This could mean that participants with a fixed mindset were actually feeling pressure from their family members and not their instructors to earn good grades and to live up to a label of success. Perhaps they perceived the instructors as supportive in their learning process and their family members as judgmental. Thus, family members could offer more process praises and less trait and intelligence praises to promote a growth mindset.

Tinto's Conceptual Schema

In each of my "Finding and Analysis" chapters, I began by analyzing the participants' transcripts using Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema as a framework in order to better understand how a retention theorist viewed the process of college student retention.

Tinto (1975) began by evaluating the students' pre-entry attributes which consisted of the students' family background, precollege schooling, and individual attributes. Of the five participants I interviewed, two participants came from advantageous family backgrounds. They were Abigail and Eleanor. The other three participants, Paula, Lori, and Claire were raised in single parent households where their mothers struggled to make ends meet. Because the mothers

were working long hours or multiple jobs, the three participants were required to fend for themselves from a young age. No one in these households assumed that their children would go to college.

Looking at the participants' precollege schooling attributes, it was interesting to note that three of the five participants (i.e., Abigail, Lori, Eleanor) maintained extremely high GPAs. As for the other two, Paula maintained a 3.0 GPA and Claire's GPA fluctuated throughout her years in high school.

The final pre-entry attribute considered by Tinto (1975) was individual attributes. Based on what the participants shared in two interviews, I would say that like most people, they had their share of positive as well as negative individual attributes.

Tinto (1975) said that the students' three pre-entry attributes influenced their initial commitment to the goal of college completion at that particular school. All of the participants showed positive initial commitment to college completion at their particular college regardless of pre-entry attributes. I speculated that Eleanor may have contemplated transferring to another community college, but did not do so partly because she was unsure of how the counselors at the other colleges would react to her. In any case, it seems as though the participants' pre-entry attributes did not make a difference in the outcome.

Furthermore, four of the five participants were returning college students. Lori, Paula, and Eleanor had dropped out once before. As for Claire, she did not drop out but she did take a year and a half off after her daughter's diagnosis. If the participants' unchanging pre-entry attributes were solely the deciding factors of retention, then it was expected that the returning students would drop out of college again. However, if the four participants were able to graduate

and/or transfer to a four-year institution this time around then it supported the idea that pre-entry attributes by themselves did not influence the students' decision to persist.

Tinto (1975) emphasized that the process of attendance measured in terms of the students' academic integration and social integration were as important as the individuals' pre-entry attributes. In my multiple case study, I found that all of the participants were able to integrate into the colleges' academic system and maintain a high GPA at their respective colleges. On the other hand, the participants' capacity to integrate into the social system differed. Of the five participants, Abigail, who was originally from the Philippines, struggled the most with forming relationships with peers, instructors, and other staff members. Yet by having just one friend at school and connecting with just one instructor seem to be all she needed to partially satisfy her need for belonging. The other participant who temporarily had difficulties with social integration was Eleanor. It was not that she could not get along with her classmates, the instructors, or other staff members, but Eleanor wondered if she really belonged in college based on the first counselor's reception of her. After all, she thought, if the first counselor was skeptical about her ability to succeed because of her past history, then would not everyone else at that college also think she did not belong? In spite of her feelings, Eleanor did not acquiesce to her first counselor. She pursued and it paid off when she earned straight As in her first semester, got to know the instructors and classmates, and eventually changed counselors. With a new counselor, Eleanor felt socially integrated into that community college.

I concluded that the participants were committed to the goal of college completion at their respective community colleges regardless of their differences in social integration. Since all of them were academically integrated, I was not sure what the participants' modified commitment would have looked like if participants were not academically integrated.

Tinto's (1975) conceptual schema did not mention motivation as a factor in retention, yet I think there were many links between the factors in Tinto's schema and factors from the motivation theories and concepts. First, Tinto's individual attributes could also include whether students had a growth mindset or fixed mindset, as described in Dweck's (1975) self-theory, as well as the person's motive to achieve success or to avoid failure as described by Atkinson (1957). Second, Tinto's family background implicitly referred to the parents' ability to satisfy their child's physiological need, need for safety, and need for love and belonging as described by Maslow. Third, Tinto's pre-college schooling attribute involved the student's need for esteem being satisfied in their primary and secondary school years.

As Tinto (1975) noted, the pre-entry attributes influenced the student's initial commitment. This initial commitment seems to refer to the student's outcome expectancy as described in Atkinson's (1957) expectancy-value theory. However, as Tinto explained, the students' initial commitment was subjected to the students' ability to engage in that particular college's academic system and social system. Tinto's academic integration was similar to the description of Deci's et al. (1991) need for competence; whereas Tinto's social integration was similar to Deci's et al. need for relatedness. Furthermore, the entire process that Tinto described was aligned with Weiner's (1986) attribution theory that outcomes, emotions, and attributions shaped the students' motivation. Depending on what the students experienced in college, how the outcome made them feel, and the perceived cause for the outcomes, students modified their commitment for that particular college. The modified commitment in Tinto's schema was the same idea as Eccles and Wigfield's (2002) efficacy expectancy since it took into account the students' reflection of what they had the ability to do in a particular situation that would bring

about a desired outcome. As for students who dropped out, Weiner's (1986) attribution theory was helpful in understanding what the students' next steps would be.

Implications

Multiple implications for community colleges emerged from this study. For one, I found that it was beneficial to examine student motivation by using more than one motivation theory because it resulted in a more comprehensive understanding of the process students go through when deciding to persist in college. The motivation theories and concepts did exactly what Tinto suggested. It looked at the longitudinal process involved in the students' decision to persist or drop out. It was unexpected that four of the participants I included in the current study were returning students but it did help me to better understand why students dropped out at certain times and why they persisted at other times.

Based on Maslow's (1970) hierarchy (1970) alone, there were several implications that emerged. For example, students who have to support themselves are more likely to drop out when faced with a choice between persisting in college or working to make ends meet. The bottom line is that fulfilling one's physiological needs is a more important than meeting one's need for esteem or self-actualization. In cases similar to Lori's case, where money was an issue, the Hawai‘i Promise program which offers to pay for the students' tuition, book supplies, and transportation could make a difference (Kalani, 2017). However, the problem remains for students who cannot apply for FAFSA on their own. In Lori's case, she was too young to qualify for financial aid without her mother's tax information. The assumption is that all parents are supportive of their children's higher education endeavors but this may not be true for some students. It would be ideal if students who were unable to qualify for financial aid on their own had access to temporary assistance from the college to help pay for the cost of tuition, fees, and

books until the students were able to apply for financial aid by themselves. This may ease the burden for students who have to afford themselves.

Maslow's (1970) hierarchy also called attention to the importance of meeting the students' need for safety. Meeting this need means taking domestic violence and other bullying incidents seriously. It seems as though temporary restraining orders were only good if others were willing to get involved. Therefore, informed campus security, faculty members, and staff should be on the lookout for offenders stalking their victims on campus. They should also be aware of ways to intervene if they see someone being abused or harassed. Campus security escort services to and from the students' vehicles could be made mandatory for those being stalked. Furthermore, affected students could clearly benefit from a support network of instructors, administrators, and staff members who are willing to check in on the students and to provide them with information about resources available on and off campus.

Besides addressing the students' physical safety on campus, the need for safety also involves students struggling with sick family members. It seems as though students are willing to miss class or drop out of school when their own health or a family member's health is in crisis. However, once the crisis is over, it appears that the students are able to resume their focus on college.

Based on the importance of addressing individuals' basic needs as outlined in Maslow's hierarchy, it would be ideal if students struggling with these needs could work with their counselors and instructors to develop a individualized plan. For example, students who have to miss classes to care for a sick family member could make up the work by viewing lectures online and submitting reflection papers to the instructor by an agreed upon date. Another individualized play may outline the student's plan to take an incomplete for the class or

withdraw from college for a period of time. When the student was ready to return to college, the counselor assigned to the student could access the individualized plan and see that the student had to fulfill a basic need before the student could focus on school again. This would allow students to drop out and return with dignity instead of go through the ordeal that Eleanor had to experience when she tried to reenroll in college.

Implications also emerged from two other motivation theories, the self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991) and the expectancy-value theory (Atkinson, 1957). These theories highlighted the fact that it was highly improbable that students were in college because they were intrinsically motivated to be there. There was always an extrinsic reward involved in attending college. Generally speaking, students who continued to believe in the principle of meritocracy tended to persist.

Since students were generally extrinsically motivated, then those community colleges who emphasized the external rewards of earning a two-year degree and/or transferring to a four-year institution could possibly encourage students to persist long enough to achieve their academic goals.

The implication from Weiner's (1986) attribution theory was that all students who experienced failure did not react in the same way. According to the attribution theory, it depended on what the students attributed as the cause of their failure or setback. Taking Dweck's (1975) self-theory into account, counselors were in key positions to use attributional retraining as a way to increase retention. Classroom instructors could also make a difference by giving students process praises in their feedback. Students also benefited when they saw improvements to their grades when they made the revisions as suggested by the instructors'

initial feedback. The message should be that instructors are there to help the student not just to evaluate their work.

It is also important to note that instructors and counselors should assess their own mindsets to determine if it is jeopardizing the students' progress. As previously stated, instructors, counselors, staff members and administrators can do the students much harm by profiling them and categorizing them based on their personal history without understanding the causes for past failures and setbacks. Eleanor summed up this sort of stereotyping as discrimination.

All of these implications point towards the understanding that forming a relationship with each and every student is the key to retention. The importance of social engagement (Porchea et al., 2010; Tinto, 1975), the need for love and belonging (Maslow, 1970), and the need for relatedness (Deci et al., 1991) highlight a common thread. For that reason, instructors need to take the time to get to know their students' names and respond to the students' emails and phone calls in a timely manner. Equally important is for colleges to hire enough counselors so that the students can have one-to-one meetings with their counselors at least twice a semester. After all, these counselors are an essential part of retention. Counselors who take the time to establish positive non-judgmental relationships with students are able to detect why certain students are underperforming. They are able to investigate if the student has an unmet lower need, unmet psychological need, a fixed mindset, or is dealing with an entirely different issue? The more informed the counselors are about the retention models, motivation theories, and motivation concepts, then the better the counselors will be equipped to guide the student and circumvent problems that could result in students dropping out. Since the counselors' role in the student retention is so essential, it is highly recommended that administrators allocate an adequate

amount of funding for this key service on campus. Counselors can only fully support each student if they are given a manageable workload. In other words, there needs to be an adequate number of counselors available on staff to offer the quality of service recommended. Furthermore, in order to better equip the counselors in dealing with the issue of retention, part of their professional development should address the motivation theories and concepts that affect retention.

As for the students whose best option is to drop out at that point in time, they should be informed about to the least harmful way of dropping out. According to Lori, abandoning a class and earning an F is not the best option since grades follow students for the rest of their lives. Lori suggested that students be informed about less harmful ways to drop out of college. Although it is an unpleasant topic to discuss at an orientation, it seems to be an important issue to cover considering the current retention rates.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a life history multiple case study utilizing oral interviews as a method to collect data provided a glimpse into the process students go through when deciding to persist or not. In comparison to other studies about student retention, this qualitative study focused specifically on public community colleges situated in Hawai‘i on the island of O‘ahu. I included Tinto’s retention model and five motivation theories and concepts as frameworks to get a comprehensive view of the longitudinal process involved in the students’ decisions. It is a mistake to think that college retention can be honed down to a single cause; doing so would oversimplify the issue. Based on my findings, the key implications for community colleges interested in increasing their retention rate included (a) setting aside emergency funds for financially independent students enrolled in college who cannot apply for financial aid on their

own; (b) encouraging faculty, staff, and administrators to be vigilant in creating a physically and emotionally safe campus; (c) prioritizing counseling services in the budget to support an adequate number of counselors who could work individually with the students on an ongoing basis to offer services such as creating individualized plans or conducting attributional retraining; (d) emphasizing the importance of social integration and process praises to instructors; (e) emphasizing the benefits of earning a two-year college degree to the students; and (f) informing the students during orientation about the best ways to drop out of college.

Community colleges in Hawai‘i continue to play a unique role in higher education by offering an opportunity for the masses to access vocational and technical education, general education, and transfer courses within a relatively close proximity to their homes. Thus, the problem is not merely about equality of access. Due to the community colleges' open door policy, colleges are faced with equality of survival issues. It is evident when the latest figures show that of all of the Fall 2013 cohorts at UHCC, 50% of them dropped out within three years (University of Hawai‘i, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, 2017a). There is still much room for improvement. This current study was geared to contribute to the understanding of college retention by highlighting how administrators, instructors, and other staff members at community colleges could address students' needs as students progressed through the longitudinal process of deciding whether they should persist in college or not.

There is much more to learn about student retention at community colleges. Further studies might investigate how self-regulation plays a role in student retention. Future studies could also focus on students attending community colleges on the neighbor islands. It is unclear whether any of these findings are applicable to community college students in other states. I would highly suggest that more localized qualitative research studies be conducted to get a better

idea of how the role of motivation is affecting the retention of community college students across the U.S.

In spite of the knowledge we have gained from all of the research conducted, we as a nation must first grapple with this question. Do we really expect all of the college students to be able to complete their requirements and earn a degree or do we believe that some of them will drop out because of their individual inadequacies? As a society, do we have a fixed mindset when it comes to higher education? A tangent question relevant to the issue of retention is who benefits from college-educated citizens. Does college education only benefit the individual through higher salaries and upward social mobility or does it benefit the society as a whole? Answering these questions will determine how we, as a nation, respond to the research findings and how we proceed to allocate resources towards the equality of survival in higher education

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Flyer

Research Study
The Retention of Community College Students in Hawai‘i

Are you currently a community college student?
Have you completed your first year of college?
If the answer is **YES to both questions above**…
Dawn Furushima, a doctoral candidate at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, would like to invite you to possibly participate in a research study.

The aim of this study is to better understand the experiences of community college students on O‘ahu.

- Study visits (2) will take place at your community college.
- Study volunteers will be given a $10 CVS gift card after the first interview and a $15 Starbucks’ gift card after the second interview in appreciation for their participation.
- A transcript of the audio interviews recorded during the study will be available to study volunteers.
- Study volunteers’ identities will be kept confidential.

To learn more about the study and to see if you qualify,
please contact Dawn Furushima at [email address]

Appendix B

Recruiting Participants

Dawn Furushima
[email address]

February 3, 2016

Please let me introduce myself. My name is Dawn Furushima. I am presently a graduate student in the College of Education at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa working on a research project for my dissertation.

I am looking for 10-15 currently enrolled community college students on O‘ahu who have completed their first year of college. Your participation would involve taking part in two separate audio-recorded interviews. Each interview would last for about an hour. I am interested in hearing about your background, experiences, thoughts, and perceptions of college. Your name and identity will be kept confidential. Participants will be given a $10 CVS gift card after the first interview and a $15 Starbucks' gift card after the second interview in appreciation of their participation in this research project.

If you have any questions or would like to see if you qualify, please contact me at [email address]. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dawn Furushima

Appendix C

Letter to Prospective Students

Thank you so much for your interest in participating in this research study. Just to double-check -- are you **currently a community college student on O‘ahu** and have you **completed at least one year of study at a community college?** If so, please continue to read on.

This research study specifically targets students who can answer “yes” to **two or more** of the following questions:

1. Do you possess a GED or equivalent instead of a high school diploma?

2. Did you delay enrolling in college after high school?

3. Do you currently work full-time (40 hours/week or more)?

4. Are you currently a part-time student (enrolled in less than 12 credits)?

5. Are you financially independent?

6. Are you a single parent?

7. Are you financially responsible for another person who is not a spouse or partner?

If can you answer “yes” to **two or more** of these questions, let’s schedule a time to meet. As a reminder, I will be asking you to commit to two interviews. Will you be able to commit to two interviews? Please contact me at [email address] or [alternative email address] and let me know when is a good time and place for our first interview. I am really looking forward to meeting you. Thank you.

Appendix D

Interview Questions

Questions for First Interview

1. Tell me about yourself. Where were you born? Where did you grow up?

2. What high school did you go to (city, state, country)? What was it like at that high school? Was there a particular teacher that you really liked or disliked? Tell me about this teacher.

3. Describe a time when you felt like you successfully learned something important or interesting. It can be an experience in school or outside of school. What made this learning experience so memorable?

4. What was your high school grade average like?

5. Tell me about your family when you were growing up? What was your home environment like?

6. In the past, how involved were your parents in your schooling? How about now?

7. What kind of degree do your parent(s) expect you to earn? What is the highest degree you expect to earn?

8. What degree or grade did your mother complete? How about your father?

9. Describe your current family responsibilities.

10. How important is it for you to be financially successful? How probable is it for you to be financially successful? Explain.

11. How important is it for you to continuously learn new things through formal education? Would you explain?

12. How important is it for you to work in a field that helps other people? Would you explain?

13. How important is it for you to become a well-known expert in your field? Would you explain?

14. How many semesters have you been at college name?

15. Have you taken any developmental education courses? If so, which courses (e.g., Eng 21, Eng 22, Math 24, Math 25, Math 32, Math 81, ESL 100) have you taken?

16. Other than developmental education courses, how many credits have you already completed?

17. How many credits are you taking this semester? What classes are you taking?

18. What is your GPA so far?

19. What is your major? What kind of job do you hope to get?

20. Why did you choose this major among all possible alternatives? What are the rewards of majoring in major? How do they relate to your ~~values or~~ goals in life? What do you foresee as some of the disadvantages of majoring in major?

21. Why did you choose this college?

23. Did you feel like you were academically prepared for college before you entered college name? Explain.

24. Does your college experience live up to your expectations? Explain.

25. This semester, what makes your classes interesting? Give me an example.

26. Have you ever felt forced to do assignments that didn't benefit you? How did that affect your attitude about that class? How well did you do in that class?

27. Are you working now? Where do you work? How many hours do you work a week? Tell me about your job. How does it relate to your major? How does it relate to your goals in life?

28. How do you balance your time among family obligations, work obligations and school obligations? What is your highest priority?

29. While attending college, have you had to worry about supporting yourself financially?

30. Does your financial situation affect whether you'll continue your education at college name?

31. Do you receive financial aid?

32. Do you or a close family member have health issues that take your attention away from school? Would you explain?

33. How safe do you feel while you're on-campus? (physically and/or emotionally)

34. How safe do you feel at your current place of residence? (physically and/or emotionally)

35. What do your instructors do to make your classroom environment a safe place to learn? Do they provide you with enough structure and organization to do well in their class?

Questions for Second Interview

36. Which activities or student groups on campus are you involved with?

37. Have you ever felt lonely or alienated at college name? Do you feel like you fit in? Explain.

38. Is it easy to make friends in college? What do you do to foster friendships on campus?

39. Name several people on campus who you trust and who care about how well you do in school. Can you turn to them when you have problems? What have they done to make you trust them?

40. Tell me about the people outside of college who support your decision to attend college name. In what ways do they support you?

41. Which instructors support you in your learning process? Which instructors frustrate you in your learning process?

42. How often do you communicate with your instructors outside of class? What makes an instructor approachable or unapproachable?

43. What services have you utilized on campus (e.g., counseling, advising, tutoring, writing center)? How useful were they?

44. Have you experienced discrimination on campus? If so, what happened? How did this experience affect you?

45. How would your classmates describe you? Why do you think they would describe you this way?

46. How well are you doing in comparison to your classmates?

47. Are you satisfied with the amount of effort you put into your assignments? Are you satisfied with your performance in college? Explain.

48. How confident are you about grasping new and challenging concepts presented in class? What is your strategy to learn these concepts?

49. Are you confident about achieving your academic goals at college name? Would you explain?

50. Do you struggle recalling information during a test? How do you deal with anxiousness before and during a test? Some students feel like their capabilities hinder their performance during a test, can you relate to them?

51. What kind of positive feedback or praises have you received from your instructors? What kind of negative feedback have you received from your instructors?

52. What particular skills have you learned in college that will prepare you for your future job or career?

53. Describe a time when you experienced a failure or setback in one of your classes. What was the situation? How did you feel at that time?

54. What do you think caused this outcome?

55. Could you have changed the outcome if you had done something differently?

56. If you were to tackle a similar assignment, would you experience failure again or could you succeed this time? Explain.

57. When you experience failures or setbacks, do you think it is usually a result of your own behavior? Explain.

58. How have other people or other factors played a role in your failures or setbacks?

59. Think about a time when you succeeded in college. What was the situation like? What do you think allowed you to succeed? Would you be able to achieve success again given a similar task?

60. In general, do you think a person is born with a certain amount of intelligence and ability or can intelligence and ability be significantly changed? For example, if a person struggled with math in high school, will this person struggle with in math in college? Will this person always struggle with math?

61. Does luck play a role in your academic success or failure? Give me an example.

62. In a classroom, if you were to choose between looking knowledgeable in front of others but not learning anything new, or learning something new at the risk of failing in front of others, which would you choose? Why?

63. Does learning something new reflect your level of intelligence or your level of effort? Would you explain?

64. Which subjects have you had difficulties with in the past that influenced your choice of major or career?

65. Which subjects have you excelled at in the past that has influenced your choice of major or career?

66. Give me examples of praises you've received from your parents? Did their praises influence your future behavior?

67. If you had the opportunity to choose a college elective, which one would you choose?
Opt A. A difficult class where the probability of success is less than 10%, but you would learn many new things
Opt B. A class that covers some new theories and concept just above your level of knowledge. Your probability of success is 50%.
Opt C. An easy class where the probability of success is greater than 90%, but much of the content is review of what you've already learned.

Would you explain?

68. If you could choose your major without worrying about your income, would you still choose this major? If not, what major would you choose?

70. What have you given up in order to attend college to earn a degree?

71. What is the longest length of time you would stay at a community college before dropping out?

72. What would be your alternative plan if you're unable to earn a college degree?

73. In your opinion, what causes students to drop out of college? What would you say to a classmate who is thinking about dropping out of college?

74. What pushes you to persevere in college?

75. Do you plan to transfer to a four-year college/university? If yes, which one? When?

Appendix E

Consent to Participate

University of Hawai'i
Consent to Participate in Research Project:
The Retention of Community College Students in Hawai‘i

My name is Dawn Furushima. I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in the College of Education. As part of the requirements for earning my graduate degree, I am doing a research project. The purpose of my project is to better understand the retention of community college students. I am asking you to participate because you are have completed at least one year of study, are currently enrolled in at least one course at a community college on O‘ahu, and matched at least two of the seven demographic criteria.

Activities and Time Commitment: If you participate in this project, I will meet with you for two separate interviews at a location and time convenient for you. The two interviews will consist of a total of approximately 76 open-ended questions. Each interview will take about an hour. Interview questions will include questions like, “Describe a time when you felt like you successfully learned something important or interesting.” “What particular skills have you learned in college that will prepare you for your future career?” Only you and I will be present during the interview. I will audio-record the interview so that I can later transcribe the interview and analyze the responses. You will be one of 10-15 people whom I will interview for this study.

Benefits and Risks: There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in this interview. The results of this project may help to improve the retention rates of students at community colleges. Your story may also inspire future community college students. I believe there is little risk to you in participating in this research project. If however, you become stressed or uncomfortable answering any of the interview questions or discussing topics with me during the interview, you can skip the question or take a break. You can also stop the interview or withdraw from the project altogether.

Privacy and Confidentiality: During the period of the research study, I will keep all data in a safe place. Only five professors at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa who are on my dissertation committee and I will have access to the data. The University of Hawai‘i Human Studies Program also has legal permission to review research records for this study. After I transcribe the interviews, I will erase or destroy the audio-recordings. When I report the results of my research project, I will not use your name or any other personal identifying information. I will use pseudonyms (fake names) and report my findings in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality to the extent allowed by law. Please know that the findings from this research project may be presented at conferences and/or printed in academic journals. Still, your identity will remain confidential.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. After the first interview, you will receive a $10 gift card to CVS and after the second interview, you will receive a $15 Starbucks' gift card for participating in my research project.

Questions: If you have any questions about this study, please email me at [email address]. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the UH Human Studies Program at [phone number] or [email address].

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign and date this signature page and return it to Dawn Furushima, the principal investigator. Keep the previous page for your records.

Signature(s) for Consent:

I have read and understand the information provided to me about participating in this research project. My signature below indicates that I give permission to join the research project entitled, *The Retention of Community College Students in Hawai'i.*

Please initial next to either "Yes" or "No" to the following:

_____ Yes _____ No I consent to be audio-recorded for the interview portion of this research.

_____ Yes _____ No I give permission to allow the investigator to use my real name to be used for the publication of this research

Date: _____

Name of Participant (Print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Signature of the Person Obtaining Consent: _____

Date of first interview: _____ Time: _____ Place: _____

Received $10 CVS Gift Card: _____

Date of second interview: _____ Time: _____ Place: _____

Received $15 Starbucks' Gift Card: _____

Appendix F

Participant's Demographic Information

Demographic Information

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Alternative Email Address: _____

Phone Number (optional): _____

1. Are you currently enrolled at a community college on O'ahu?
   □ Yes – Which community college? _____
   □ No

2. Are you in your second year (or more) of college?

   □ Yes – What year? _____
   □ No

3. What diploma or certificate did you earn?
   □ High school diploma – Which high school? _____
   □ GED certificate
   □ Other high-school diploma equivalent (e.g., Competency Based High School Diploma)

4. What year did you graduate from high school or earn your GED? _____

   What month and year did you enter college? _____

5. Dependency status and family responsibilities
   □ Dependent
   Independent
   □ Unmarried, no dependent(s)
   □ Unmarried, with dependent(s)
   □ Married

6. Who are you financially responsible for other than a spouse or partner?
   _____

7. Are you currently a part-time student (enrolled in less than 12 credits)?
   □ Yes

□ No

8. Attendance intensity while in college
□ Always a full-time student
□ Mixed (sometimes a full-time student, sometimes a part-time student)
□ Always a part-time student

9. Do you work full-time (40 hours/week)?
□ Yes – How many hours? _____
□ No – How many hours? _____

10. Did you attend other colleges before this one?
□ Yes – Where? _____ When? _____
□ No

11. Degree program
□ Certificate (please specify): _____

□ Associate's degree (please specify): _____

12. Do you plan to transfer to another college/university?
□ Yes – Where? _____ When? _____
□ No

13. Age
□ 18 years or younger
□ 19 years
□ 20-23 years
□ 24-29 years
□ 30-39 years
□ 40 years or older

14. What city and state are you a resident of? _____
If you are not from the U.S., what country are you from? _____

15. What was your highest level of high school math completed?
□ Less than algebra 2
□ Algebra 2
□ Trigonometry
□ Precalculus
□ Calculus or math beyond calculus

16. **Ethnicity (check all that apply):**

Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Asian	
□Native Hawaiian or Part-Hawaiian	□Chinese	□Caucasian
□Samoan	□Japanese	□American Indian or Alaskan Native
□Tongan	□Filipino	□African-American or Black
□Guamanian or Chamorro	□Korean	□Hispanic
	□Vietnamese	□Other (please specify):
	□Laotian	_____
□Micronesia (not Guamanian or Chamorro)	□Asian Indian	□Mixed Race (please specify what is not listed):
	□Thai	_____
		_____
□Other Pacific Islander (please specify):	□Other Asian (please specify):	_____
_____	_____	

17. Comments/Suggestions/Advice?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix G

Nodes for Coding the Case Studies

Nodes for Coding

Conceptual Models and Theories	Nodes
Attribution Theory	Ability Causal antecedent-Actor v observer Causal antecedent-Comparison to others Causal antecedent-Hedonic bias Causal antecedent-Past history performance Causal antecedent-social norms Casual ascriptions Causal dimension-causality-external Causal dimension-causality-internal Causal dimension-controllability-controllable Causal dimension-controllability-uncontrollable Causal dimension-stability-stable Causal dimension-stability-unstable Effort Luck Positive outcome dependency Task difficulties Unexpected negative outcome
Expectancy-Value Theory	Attainment value Cost value Expectancy Incentive Intrinsic value Motive-achieve success Motive-avoid failure Utility value
Learned Helplessness	Learned helplessness
Maslow's Hierarchy	Need for esteem Need for love Need for safety Psychological need Self actualization
Retention Models	Academic integration Academic preparation Family background Individual attributes Situational Social integration

	Socio-demographic

Self Determination Theory	Amotivation Autonomy Autonomy supportive Competence Controlled learning environment External regulation Extrinsic motivation Identified regulation Integrated regulation Intrinsic motivation Introjected regulation Relatedness
Self Efficacy	Construed environment Fortuity High self efficacy Imposed environment Low self efficacy Selected environment
Self Theory	Effort praise Intelligence praise Self theory-Fixed Self theory-Malleable Strategy praise Trait praise

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